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HAPPY MOTHER'S day



Flint to honor national champion Trey McKenney with community celebration

sports, pg 39

Saginaw coach Billy 'Coach' Cork remembered for decades of impact



BILLY CORK (COURTESY)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Billy “Coach” Cork, a beloved figure in Saginaw’s athletic community whose decades of coaching shaped generations of young athletes, died April 19, 2026. He was 71.

Born Sept. 7, 1954, in Starkville, Mississippi, to Odie V. Cork Sr. and Doreather Cork, Cork moved to Saginaw, where he would build a lifelong legacy rooted in family, faith and community leadership.

A 1973 graduate of Saginaw High School, he later married his high school sweetheart, Karen Lee Cork, on June 7, 1980. The couple

shared 45 years of marriage. Cork worked for Eaton Corporation for 30 years before retiring, while also dedicating much of his life to mentoring youth through sports.

Cork’s passion for athletics began early. As a teenager, he played baseball on Saginaw’s south side and, by age 15, had already begun coaching younger players. That early start would evolve into a lifelong commitment to guiding young people both on and off the field.

In 1984, he organized and sponsored the Company C softball team, serving as both manager and player-coach. The team went on to make history as the only minority modified softball team in

Michigan to win state titles, along with multiple district championships. Company C later expanded into basketball, football and bowling, further extending Cork’s influence across sports.

He went on to coach at multiple levels, including as head varsity baseball coach at Bridgeport High School beginning in 2005. In 2012, he became head baseball coach at Birch Run High School, where he earned four District Coach of the Year honors and one Regional Coach of the Year award.

Cork continued his coaching journey at the collegiate level, joining Delta College in 2021 as associate head coach before becoming head coach of the men’s baseball program in 2022. Known for emphasizing academics and personal growth alongside athletic development, he encouraged players to create opportunities for themselves beyond the game.

Off the field, Cork was known for his humor, storytelling and ability to connect with people from all walks of life. Whether mentoring young athletes, debating a topic with friends or enjoying a St. Louis Cardinals game with a Dr Pepper in hand, he left a lasting impression on those around him.

Continues on pg 2, Billy Cork



Summer jobs guide for teens in the Great Lakes Bay Region

YOUTH BANNER, COVER



Cinco de Mayo celebrations return across Great Lakes Bay Region and Flint

LATINO BANNER, COVER

From cover, Billy Cork

He was also active in his faith community at Mount Olive Institutional Missionary Baptist Church, where he served in multiple ministries, including recreation, security and as a greeter.

Cork's contributions were recognized throughout his life. He was a lifetime member of the Michigan High School Athletic Coaches Association and the American Baseball Coaches Association. In 2024, he received the Community Manhood Leadership Award from Omega Psi Phi Fraternity's Chi Xi Chapter. He was also named a 2025 recipient of The Michigan Banner's Heart of the City Motivation Award, which will be presented posthumously in June 2026.

Family members and friends remember Cork as a devoted husband, father and grandfather whose greatest pride was his family. He is survived by his wife, Karen Cork; sons Brandon Cork of Fort Worth, Texas, and Brent Cork of Irving, Texas; daughter-in-law Danielle Cork; and granddaughter Cassidy Brielle Cork, whom loved ones described as the joy of his life.

He is also survived by his mother, Doreather Cork of Saginaw; sister Mary Helen Robinson; brothers Odie Cork Jr., Charles Cork and Willie Cork; and a large extended family of relatives, godchildren and lifelong friends.

Cork was preceded in death by his father, Odie V. Cork Sr.; his brother, Levon Kennedy Cork; and other close family members.

Those who knew him say his legacy extends far beyond wins and championships. Through decades of coaching, mentorship and community involvement, Cork helped shape not only athletes, but confident, disciplined young men prepared for life.

His impact, they say, will continue to be felt across Saginaw fields, classrooms and neighborhoods for years to come.

**THIS DAY IN
MICHIGAN
HISTORY**

MAY 1, 1886

May 1, known as May Day, is observed internationally as a day honoring workers and the labor movement. The date was chosen to commemorate the nationwide labor strikes that began May 1, 1886, when hundreds of thousands of workers across the United States—including those in Michigan's growing industrial cities—demanded an eight-hour workday. The movement gained global significance following the Haymarket Affair in Chicago later that week. May Day was formally established as an international labor holiday in 1889 by the International Socialist Congress. In Michigan, where manufacturing and union organizing played a major role in shaping the state's identity, May Day remains a symbol of worker solidarity and the ongoing pursuit of fair labor practices.

MAY DAY
HAPPY LABOUR DAY!

International Workers' Day

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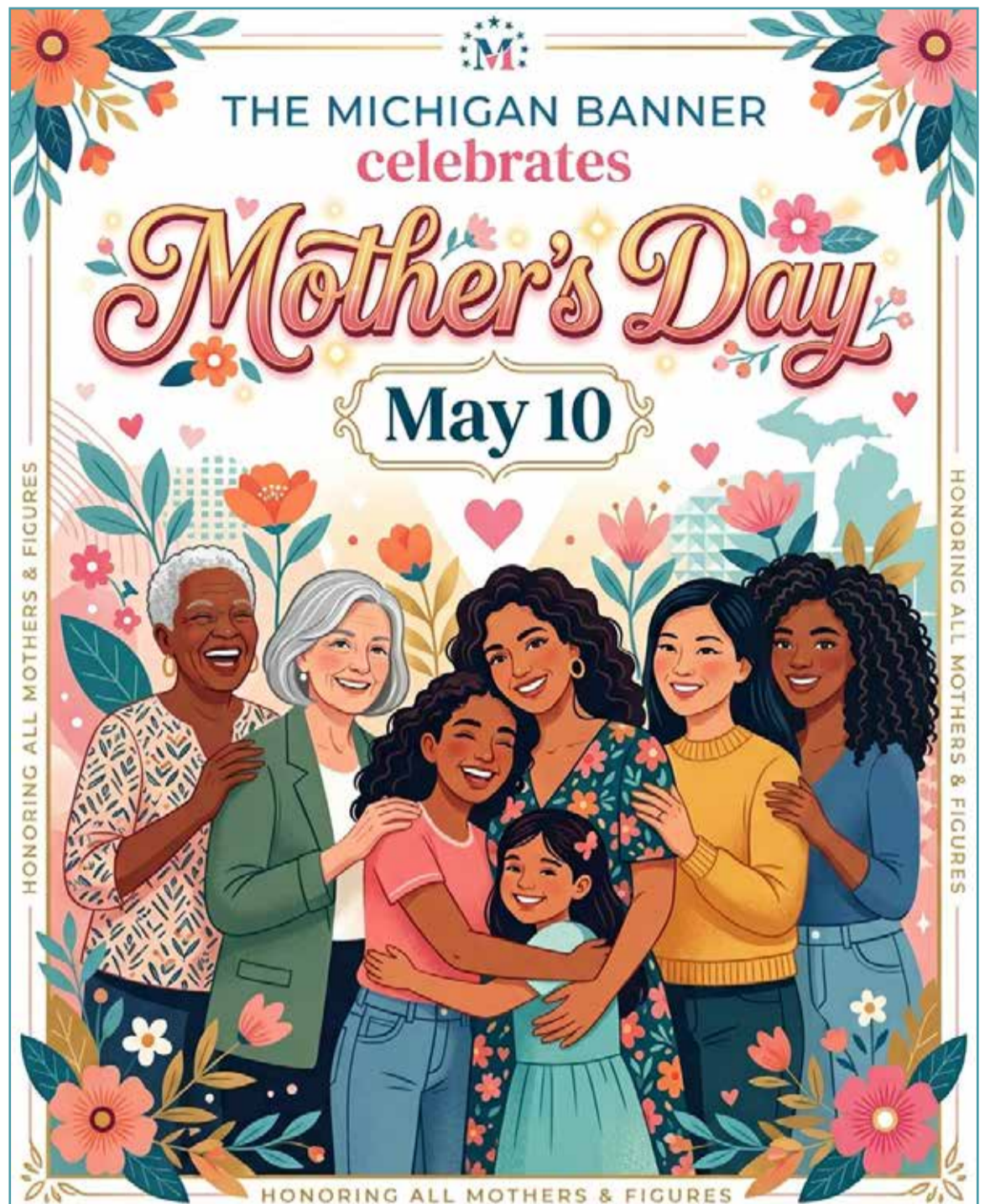
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The Michigan Banner, Latino Banner and Youth Banner operates and serves as a print and online media venue committed to educating, informing and enlightening our readership regarding events and news that directly and indirectly affect the communities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

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MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER

VOLUME 8 • NUMBER 9



Summer jobs guide for teens in the Great Lakes Bay Region



TEEN FILLING OUT A JOB APPLICATION (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Teens across the Great Lakes Bay Region are beginning their search for summer jobs, and a growing number of local and online resources are making it easier to find opportunities in Saginaw, Bay City and Midland.

Seasonal hiring typically ramps up in May, with openings in restaurants, retail stores, parks and community programs.

For many teens, a summer job is more than just a way to earn money — it's a chance to build experience, gain independence and develop skills that will carry into the future.

Several local organizations offer direct support for teens entering the workforce. In Saginaw, the Saginaw Michigan Works! office provides job search assistance, resume help and access to youth employment programs. Teens can also explore job listings through the state's online sys-

tem, which connects job seekers with employers across Michigan.

In Bay and Midland counties, similar services are available through Bay-Arenac Michigan Works! and GST Michigan Works!. These agencies offer workshops, career coaching and hands-on support to help teens prepare for applications and interviews.

Local governments are another source of summer jobs. The City of Saginaw and Saginaw County Parks and Recreation

Commission often hire teens for seasonal roles such as park maintenance, recreation programs and lifeguarding. Similar opportunities can be found in Bay City and Midland through local parks and recreation departments.

Teens can also build experience through programs offered by the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Great Lakes Bay Region, which provide job readiness training and connections to local employers.

Online job platforms are another useful tool. Websites like Indeed allow teens to search for entry-level positions by location, making it easier to find nearby opportunities. Many local businesses post openings on these platforms, especially for summer and part-time roles.

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity also provides guidance on youth employment, including work permits, wage laws and hour restrictions for minors. Understanding these rules can help teens stay safe and ensure they are treated fairly on the job.

Before applying, teens are encouraged to prepare a basic resume that includes school activities, volunteer work or extracurricular involvement. Taking time to practice interview skills and ask questions about schedules and expectations can also help applicants stand out.

As hiring continues across the region, teens who use a mix of local and online resources — and apply early — may find opportunities that offer both income and valuable real-world experience.

Michigan launches youth initiative to prepare next generation of workers



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN A JOB READINESS SESSION (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan is introducing a new effort aimed at helping teens better understand their rights as they enter the workforce, with state officials emphasizing the importance of early education and workplace safety.

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity announced the Youth Workers' Rights Initiative on April 27 as part of Workplace Rights Week. The initiative includes a set of online tools and resources designed to help young people navigate their first jobs with confidence.

State leaders say the goal is to ensure teens understand key workplace protections before

they begin working. The resources focus on topics such as identifying unsafe conditions, understanding wage laws and knowing when and how to speak up if something feels wrong on the job.

"As more young people enter the workforce, it's critical they understand their rights," said LEO Director Susan Corbin. "We're developing resources that will empower the next generation with the tools to stay safe, speak up and make informed decisions in the workplace."

The initiative also highlights Michigan's broader effort to support workers at every stage of their careers, starting with their first job. Officials say early awareness can help prevent workplace injuries and reduce the likelihood of labor violations.

Deputy Director of Labor

Sean Egan said the focus is not only on responding to problems, but preventing them before they happen.

"This effort is about prevention as much as protection," Egan said. "By educating young workers early, we can reduce workplace injuries, prevent violations and build a stronger culture of safety and respect across Michigan's workforce."

Workplace safety guidance is being supported by the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which is helping young workers learn how to recognize hazards and avoid injury. The information is especially relevant for teens working in industries such as food service, retail and agriculture, where many young workers get their start.

Additional guidance is being

provided through LEO's Wage and Hour Division, which outlines rules around work hours, job restrictions and pay protections for minors. The division also provides information on how young workers can report concerns or seek help if their rights are not being upheld.

State officials say the initiative is expected to grow, with plans to work alongside schools and community organizations to develop more formal education programs. The long-term goal is to create a generation of workers who are informed, prepared and confident in the workplace.

More information and resources are available through the state's youth employment website.

Flint schools continue recovery efforts with added academic and wellness support for students



TEACHER IN CLASSROOM (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Schools in Flint are continuing to strengthen academic and wellness programs as students work through ongoing recovery from pandemic-related disruptions.

During the 2025-26 school year, districts have expanded tutoring, increased classroom support and added mental health services to address both academ-

ic and social challenges. Many students are still working to rebuild skills in subjects such as math and reading after periods of remote and hybrid learning.

Targeted support has become a central strategy. Schools are using data to identify students who need additional help and providing small-group instruction, extended learning time and individualized interventions.

The Michigan Department of Education has encouraged

districts to take a comprehensive approach, focusing on both academic progress and student well-being.

In addition to academic support, schools are expanding social-emotional learning programs. These initiatives help students develop skills such as stress management, communication and problem-solving, which are essential for both school and everyday life.

Federal relief funding has

played a major role in supporting these efforts, allowing districts to hire additional staff and expand services. As that funding begins to phase out, schools are working to determine how to sustain programs in the long term.

Educators say the focus remains on ensuring students feel supported in all areas, helping them move forward with confidence.

The logo for the Saginaw Bay Youth Orchestra (SBYO) features the letters 'SBYO' in a large, bold, white font with a black outline. Below the letters, the words 'saginaw bay youth orchestra' are written in a smaller, white, lowercase font. A vibrant rainbow banner is draped across the logo, extending from the right side of the page towards the center.

SBYO

saginaw bay youth orchestra

A photograph of a youth orchestra performing in a concert hall. The musicians are seated at music stands, playing various instruments including violins and cellos. The scene is lit with stage lights, and the background shows the interior of a theatre.

Concert May 3 | 3 pm
The Temple Theatre

Affordable ways for teens to celebrate MOTHER'S DAY

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Mother's Day is coming up on May 10, and for many teens, showing appreciation doesn't have to mean spending a lot of money. Simple, thoughtful gestures can often mean more than expensive gifts — especially when they come from the heart.

For students balancing school, activities and limited budgets, finding affordable ways to celebrate can feel challenging. But there are plenty of creative options that focus on time, effort and meaning instead of cost.

One of the most popular ways to celebrate is by making something personal. Handmade cards, photo collages or even a short video message can capture memories and appreciation in a way that store-bought gifts cannot. Taking time to write a heartfelt message about what a mom or mother figure means can leave a lasting impact.

Helping out around the house is another meaningful option. Taking over chores for the day — such as cleaning, doing laundry or cooking — can give moms a chance to relax. Some teens choose to prepare breakfast or dinner, even if it is something simple like pancakes or pasta.

Spending quality time together is another way to make the day special. That could include going for a walk, watching a favorite movie or planning a small family activity. For teens with busy schedules, setting aside uninterrupted time can be one of the most valuable gifts.

For those who want to give a physical gift, affordable options like flowers, candles or small self-care items can still feel spe-



MOM AND DAUGHTER (FILE PHOTO)

cial when paired with a thoughtful note. Many local stores offer budget-friendly options, and some teens choose to split costs with siblings to create a more complete gift.

Acts of appreciation can also extend beyond the day itself. Writing a list of reasons why a

mom is appreciated, creating coupons for future help or planning something for later in the month are ways to keep the celebration going.

Mother's Day can look different for everyone, and not all teens may be celebrating a parent. The holiday can also be a time to rec-

ognize grandmothers, guardians or other important figures who provide support and care.

At its core, the day is about showing gratitude. For teens, that can be as simple as putting in effort, being present and expressing appreciation in a genuine way — no big budget required.

TEMPLE
ARTS

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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



Saginaw summit tackles mental health

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — A local mental health summit aimed at reducing stigma and connecting residents to resources will take place May 16 at the McDowell Healing Arts Center, with a focus on building community and supporting wellness.

The “Break the Stigma with the Sigmas” summit, hosted by Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc., is scheduled from 1 to 3 p.m. at 3253 Congress Ave. Organizers say the free event will offer attendees opportunities to learn coping skills, connect with mental health providers and participate in community-centered activities.

The summit will include music, refreshments, door prizes and interactive sessions designed to create a welcoming space for conversations around mental health—an issue that continues to impact young people across Michigan and the nation.

The event comes at a time when youth mental health challenges remain widespread. In Michigan, an estimated 142,000 adolescents experience a major depressive episode each year, while roughly 90,000 report serious thoughts of suicide annually, according to data from the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Statewide data also shows that about 13.5% of children ages 3 to 17 have struggled with anxiety or depression, a rate higher than the national average. Meanwhile, nearly 40,000 Michigan youth with mental health conditions are not receiving needed treatment, often due to barriers such as cost, access or stigma.

Mental health concerns among youth have been rising in recent years. Nationally, nearly 1 in 5 adolescents has experienced a major depressive episode, highlighting the growing need for early intervention and accessible support systems.

3rd Annual
BREAK the STIGMA with the SIGMAS

A MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS SUMMIT

- Build community
- Learn coping skills
- Connect with providers
- Refreshments, music, and fun activities

May 16, 2026 | 1pm - 3pm ET
McDowell Healing Arts Center
3253 Congress Ave, Saginaw, MI 48602
Contact: Bro Ben Tenney (989)882-7708

Door Prizes

BREAK THE STIGMA WITH THE SIGMAS EVENT FLYER (COURTESY)

Experts note that stigma remains one of the most significant barriers preventing young people from seeking help. Events like the Saginaw summit aim to normalize conversations around mental health and encourage individuals to access available resources before reaching a crisis point.

The event is designed for people of all ages, but its messaging is especially relevant for youth and

young adults navigating stress, anxiety and other challenges tied to school, relationships and social pressures.

The event also promotes awareness of crisis resources, including the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, which provides free, confidential support 24 hours a day.

Addressing mental health requires collaboration between

families, educators, health professionals and local organizations. By bringing those groups together in one setting, the summit aims to strengthen connections and reduce the isolation often associated with mental health struggles.

For more information, attendees can contact Bro. Ben Tenney at 989-882-7708.

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Prom Anniversary



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Banquet/Dinner
FRI May 15, 2026

Prom2k26 Event
Sat May 16, 2026



Guest Of Honor: **TBA**

Saginaw Michigan 48602



Latino Banner

LIDER EN LA
DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE

Cinco de Mayo celebrations return across Great Lakes Bay Region and Flint



SAGINAW CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION (COURTESY)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Communities across the Great Lakes Bay Region and Flint are preparing to mark Cinco de Mayo with a series of events celebrating Mexican culture, history and community traditions, with expanded programming ranging from large-scale festivals to concerts and family-friendly gatherings.

One of the region's largest observances is set for Saturday, May 2, in Saginaw, where the 47th annual Cinco de Mayo Festival will be hosted by La Unión Cívica Mexicana. The day will begin with a parade at 10:30 a.m., traveling along North Michigan Avenue and Genesee Avenue before concluding

near Saginaw United High School.

Following the parade, a festival will take place from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 300 Johnson St., featuring live entertainment, traditional dance performances and a variety of food vendors. The celebration is expected to continue through May 3, offering a full weekend of programming centered on Mexican heritage.

Additional celebrations in Saginaw will continue into the following week. A Cinco de Mayo concert event titled "K?Onda! 4th Annual Cinco de Mayo" is scheduled for Tuesday, May 5, at the SVRC Marketplace Outdoor Pavilion, 203 S. Washington Ave. The event will feature live entertainment from 5:30 to 9

p.m., including performances by Grupo Yatekos, Severo Vasquez, Amelia Haight and J. Lou, along with food and merchandise vendors beginning at 1 p.m. Organizers say the event will highlight cumbia music and regional talent while creating a festive, family-friendly atmosphere.

In Flint, a large-scale Cinco de Mayo celebration is planned for Saturday, May 2, in downtown Flint's Buckham Alley. The Genesee County Premier Cinco de Mayo Celebration will run from 2 to 8 p.m. and include live music, Latin food, cultural performances and activities designed to showcase Latino heritage. The free event is expected to draw residents from across Genesee County and surround-

ing communities.

Flint will also host a Cinco de Mayo-themed 5K/10K run around May 5, providing another opportunity for residents to participate in a community-centered event tied to the holiday.

Beyond cultural celebrations, community resources will also be highlighted during the week. A free Latino Health & Resource Fair is scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 2026, at Thompson Middle School in Saginaw, offering access to health information, services and support programs for area residents.

Organizations such as the Hispanic Technology & Community Center continue to support cultural programming and outreach efforts throughout the region, helping to sustain and grow events that celebrate Latino heritage while connecting residents to educational and community resources.

Cinco de Mayo commemorates Mexico's victory over French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. In the United States, the holiday has evolved into a broader celebration of Mexican culture, particularly in communities with strong Latino populations.

As celebrations take place across Saginaw, Flint and the surrounding region, organizers emphasize the importance of honoring the holiday's historical roots while creating inclusive spaces for residents to come together through music, food and shared cultural experiences.

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

LATINO HEALTH & RESOURCE FAIR

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2026
12NOON—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
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DOORS OPEN/REGISTRATION: 12NOON
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PROGRAM: 12:30PM
HEALTH SCREENINGS/VENDORS: 1:30PM-3:30PM

EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!
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For more information or to participate as a vendor, call Catherine Martinez at (989) 393-4231.

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K'Onda!
La Mision

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Saginaw County Health Department
Saginaw Public Schools
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Saginaw LLEAD

May 2026
Monthly Meeting



Inviting ALL Hispanic Leaders & the General Public!



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

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

Thursday, May 14th, 2026
6:00PM-7:30PM
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 - Lotion
 - Body wash/soap
 - Deodorant
 - Hand soap
 - Sunscreen
 - Body/face cleansing wipes
 - Q-Tip
- **Laundry detergent/pods**
- **Over the counter medications/first aid items (NEW/UNOPENED)**
 - Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
 - Ibuprofen (Advil)
 - Naproxen (Aleve)
 - Tums
 - Benadryl
 - Allergy relief
 - Pain relief patch/cream
 - Band-Aids
 - Ace bandages
 - Instant cold compress
 - Antibiotic ointment
 - Electrolyte packets
- **Work gloves**
- **Hats**

- **Food Items**
 - Flour
 - Shortening
 - Baking powder
 - Sugar
 - Cooking oil
 - Pinto beans
 - Rice
 - Cereal
 - Peanut butter
 - Jelly
 - Oatmeal
 - Salt
 - All spices (black pepper, onion, garlic, cumin, etc.)
 - Canned fruit
 - Canned vegetables
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 - Soups
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 - Electrolyte drinks
 - Water

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The 47th Annual CINCO DE MAYO

Saginaw

Los Estrellas de Oro

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CONJUNTO G'z

Grupo JEZELO

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Park Opens 11am to 5pm

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2 MAY 2026

\$5.00 COVER

Hosted by DJ El Boogie










Latino representation grows in local and national politics as civic engagement rises



ILLUSTRATION DEPICTING THE RISE OF LATINO REPRESENTATION IN POLITICS (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Latino representation in government continues to expand across the United States, with growing numbers of Hispanic leaders winning local office and increasing their presence at the state and federal levels.

Recent data from the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials shows there are now an estimated 7,700 Latino elected officials nationwide, up from 6,883 in 2020. The increase reflects a broader trend of rising civic participation within Latino communities, which make up about 16% of the U.S. population.

While still underrepresented in elected office, Latino leaders are gaining ground in city councils, school boards and state leg-

islatures. Many of those elected in recent months are the first Hispanic officials to serve in their roles, signaling continued shifts in voter engagement and community leadership.

In Michigan, that trend is evident in Lansing, where Clara Martinez and Deyanira Nevarez Martinez were sworn in earlier this year, contributing to what is believed to be the first majority-Latino city council in the country. Their elections highlight the growing influence of Latino voters in local decision-making and policy discussions.

Similar milestones have been reached nationwide. In Pennsylvania, Jaime Arroyo took office as the first Latino mayor of Lancaster after winning a decisive election. In cities across Iowa, Georgia and Ohio, Latino candidates have also broken barriers,

becoming the first to serve on their respective city councils.

Political observers point to years of grassroots organizing and community advocacy as key drivers behind the rise in Latino leadership. Increased engagement among younger voters and first-time candidates has also contributed to the shift, particularly at the local level where candidates often have closer ties to the communities they serve.

At the federal level, Latino representation has also grown steadily. The current Congress includes 56 Hispanic or Latino members, accounting for more than 10% of its total membership. That marks significant growth compared with just 14 members four decades ago.

Latinas have also reached new milestones in state government. Women of Hispanic de-

scendent now hold a record number of seats in state legislatures, reflecting continued progress in representation across multiple levels of government.

Advocates say local offices remain a critical entry point for Latino leadership, where elected officials can directly address community concerns such as education, housing and economic opportunity. That local engagement often serves as a foundation for broader political influence over time.

As Latino communities continue to grow in Michigan and across the country, the increase in representation signals a long-term shift in the political landscape. Leaders and organizers expect that momentum to continue as more individuals step forward to serve in public office and shape policy in their communities.



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SEEN ON THE SCENE:

Members of the Latinx Technology & Community Center of Flint attend Latino Legislative Advocacy Day at the Michigan State Capitol on April 30, 2026, joining organizations including MI Poder, the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan and Somos Votantes to advocate for Latino communities.

(Photo credit: Latinx Technology & Community Center)



Latina leaders gather in Grand Rapids for conference focused on empowerment, leadership



THE 2026 WEST MICHIGAN LATINA CONFERENCE WAS HELD ON APRIL 22, 2026, AT DAVENPORT'S W.A. LETTINGA CAMPUS. (PHOTO CREDIT: VIVE MICHIGAN)

BY MB STAFF

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — More than 200 Latina professionals from across Michigan gathered April 22 at Davenport University for the second annual Latina Conference West Michigan, an event focused on leadership development, networking and elevating Latina voices across industries.

Hosted by Vive Michigan at Davenport's W.A. Lettinga Campus, the conference brought together women working in business, education, health care and community leadership for a day of professional development and connection.

Organizers centered this year's theme, "Power, Voice & Leadership Without Limits," on

creating space for Latina leaders to grow and engage in meaningful dialogue. The event reached full capacity for the second consecutive year, reflecting continued demand for culturally relevant leadership opportunities.

The conference featured a series of breakout sessions and discussions designed to address career advancement, personal growth and community impact. Attendees also participated in networking opportunities aimed at strengthening connections among Latina professionals throughout West Michigan.

Davenport University leaders emphasized the importance of hosting events that foster inclusion and cross-cultural understanding on campus and beyond. The university's Casa Latina re-

source center played a key role in supporting the conference and its mission to expand opportunities for Latino students and professionals.

Among the speakers was Alejandra Guillén, a former Davenport marketing and recruitment leader for Casa Latina who now serves as executive director of Latin Americans United for Progress. Her participation highlighted the continued collaboration between educational institutions and community-based organizations working to support Latino advancement.

The conference's keynote address, delivered by Lisa R. Garcia, focused on empowering Latinas to lead authentically and confidently in their respective fields. Her message encouraged

participants to embrace leadership roles without waiting for external validation, reinforcing the conference's broader theme of self-advocacy and growth.

Events like the Latina Conference West Michigan come amid a broader push across Michigan to expand representation and professional opportunities for Latino communities. Organizers say creating intentional spaces for mentorship, leadership training and networking remains critical to closing gaps in representation across industries.

As participation continues to grow, conference leaders say the goal is to further strengthen a statewide network of Latina professionals equipped to lead in their workplaces and communities.

COMMUNITY

Saginaw Community Foundation awards more than \$800K in grants to support local programs



ILLUSTRATION DEPICTING SAGINAW COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CHECK PRESENTATION (FILE PHOTO)

MY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Saginaw Community Foundation awarded more than \$800,000 in grants earlier this year to support a wide range of programs focused on youth development, education, neighborhood revitalization and basic community needs.

Between Jan. 8 and March 11, the foundation distributed \$803,032 through its designated, donor-advised and competitive grant processes, supporting 148 projects across Saginaw County and beyond.

The funding reflects continued investment in initiatives aimed at strengthening commu-

nities, expanding opportunities and improving quality of life. More than 100 nonprofit organizations received support during the latest grant cycle, with funding directed toward youth services, housing, arts and culture, and essential services.

Grants supported a variety of efforts, including prevention programming for youth, community-based care initiatives, neighborhood revitalization projects and expanded access to resources for residents in need. Several collaborative efforts also received funding, highlighting ongoing partnerships among organizations working to address community challenges.

Among the larger investments, the Robert E. Stark and

Martin H. Stark Foundation Fund distributed \$189,000 to support more than 100 nonprofit agencies, while additional funding supported organizations such as Saginaw Shiawassee Habitat for Humanity, which received \$30,000 for neighborhood revitalization efforts.

Other grants supported programs focused on child welfare, youth justice coordination, literacy initiatives and community outreach, reflecting the foundation's broad approach to addressing local needs.

The Saginaw Community Foundation, established in 1984, connects donors with community needs through grantmaking and leadership initiatives. The organization continues to play a

key role in supporting nonprofits and programs that serve residents throughout the region.

Organizations interested in applying for future funding opportunities can access information through the foundation's website, with competitive grant deadlines scheduled throughout the year.

The following Saginaw Community Foundation funds provided designated and donor advised (non-competitive) grants, supporting a variety of programs/projects, Jan. 8 – Mar. 11, 2026:

A String Instrumental Program Fund – \$1,032

- BWIA-Michigan

Bay/Saginaw Health Plan – \$360,000

- United Way of Bay County - ConnectUP, a Community Information Exchange for Bay County residents

Claramunt Dance Scholarship – \$1,000

- Frankenmuth Dance Center

Damuth Fund – \$1,000

- New Covenant Christian Center - 2026 WNBA Youth Experience

Dow Community Gives – \$4,000

- Bridgeport-Spaulding School District - Bridgeport High School Senior Leadership Group – \$1,000

**Continues on pg 19,
Saginaw Community
Foundation**

COMMUNITY

From page 18, Saginaw Community Foundation

- First Ward Community Center – \$1,000
- Merrill High School - Class of 2029 – \$1,000
- Saginaw Township Community Schools - Heritage High School: Varsity Boys Baseball – \$1,000

**Fordney Club Donor
Advised Fund – \$3,750**

- Fordney Club - Community Baptist Christian School – \$500
- Hemlock Baseball & Softball Little League – \$250
- Hemlock Community Pep Club - 2026 Huskie Paw Ball – \$250
- Saginaw Art Initiative – \$500
- Saginaw County 4-H Advisory Board – \$500
- Saginaw Township Community Schools - Heritage High School Boys Baseball – \$500
- Saginaw Township Community Schools - Heritage High School Girls Soccer – \$500
- Swan Valley High School Baseball – \$750

**Hemlock Semiconductor
Hemlock Site Fund
– \$2,500**

- Frankenmuth Public Schools – Muth Community Players – \$500
- Freeland Community Schools – Freeland Robotics Team FRC 5166 – \$1,000
- MUTH Youth Baseball and Softball Ltd. – Frankenmuth 8U Grey Team – \$1,000

**Aarol W. & Elaine M. Irish
Family Foundation Fund
– \$5,500**

- East Side Soup Kitchen – \$2,500
- St. Jude's Children's Hospital – \$3,000

**K. Lucille and James V.
Martineau Family Fund
– \$2,500**

- TempleArts - Andy Warhol exhibition

**Mike and Betsy Meyer
Youth Fund – \$1,000**

- Saginaw Field and Stream Club -Youth Training

**Nexteer Community
Improvement Fund
– \$27,050**

- The Children's Center (Detroit) – \$20,000
- Friends of Hoyt Park - Pond Hockey Tournament – \$2,800
- Michigan Special Olympics – \$250
- Minority Entrepreneurial Enterprise (local fiduciary for NHL Street Ball) – \$3,000
- SCF - Community Engagement and Inclusion Council Symposium – \$1,000

**Wilkins Donor Advised
Fund – \$5,200**

- BWIA-Michigan

**SCF Staff Discretionary
– \$1,000**

- Saginaw County - Threads of Hope

**Robert E. Stark & Martin
H. Stark Foundation Fund
– \$189,000**

- Supporting 107 nonprofit agencies with grants ranging from \$500 to \$10,000

The following organizations received grants to support programs/projects via various competitive grants available through Saginaw Community Foundation, Jan. 8, – Mar. 11, 2026:

**211 Northeast Michigan –
\$25,000 (from the Lulah**
**C. McMullen & Family
Endowment Fund)**

- Saginaw County Essential Services Connection Project

**Adoption Option – \$25,000
(\$14,953 from the Carl
Werth, Sr. & Ruth Werth
Memorial Fund and \$10,047
from the Lulah C. McMullen
& Family Endowment
Fund)**

- Hope Finds a Home

**CAN Council of the Great
Lakes Bay Region – \$25,000
(\$12,500 from the At-Risk
Youth Fund, \$10,000 from
the Saginaw County Youth
FORCE Fund, \$2,500 from
the YWCA Fund for Women
& Children)**

- Prevention Education: Creating Safe Communities for Saginaw County Children

**The Caring Closet – \$21,000
(\$14,526 from the Healthy
Youth Healthy Seniors
Fund and \$6,474 from
the Lulah C. McMullen &
Family Endowment Fund.)**

- Caring Closet Parking and Building Expansion

**FACT – Families and
Children Together –
\$12,500 (\$10,000 from the
Saginaw County Youth
FORCE Fund, \$2,500 from
the YWCA Fund for Women
& Children)**

- Community-Based Care Prevention Program

The Great Mural Project
**– \$5,000 (from the SCF
Unrestricted Fund)**

- Community Canopy

**Greater Impact
International Ministries
– \$10,000 (from the Lulah
C. McMullen & Family
Endowment Fund)**

- Greater Impact Community Outreach

**Michigan Center for Youth
Justice – \$5,000 (from
the Saginaw County Youth
FORCE Fund)**

- Strengthening Juvenile Justice Coordination in Saginaw County

**One Week, One Street –
\$15,000 (from the SCF
Unrestricted Fund)**

- One Week, One Street

**ROOTEDin HOPE – \$15,000
(from the At-Risk Youth
Fund)**

- Read Lead Succeed

**Saginaw Shiawassee
Habitat for Humanity
– \$30,000 (\$692 from
the Neighborhood
Revitalization Fund and
\$29,308 from the SCF
Unrestricted Fund)**

- Neighborhood Revitalization 2026

**Women's Farm and Garden
– \$10,000 (from the SCF
Unrestricted Fund)**

- 100 Trees for 100 Years from 100s of Women

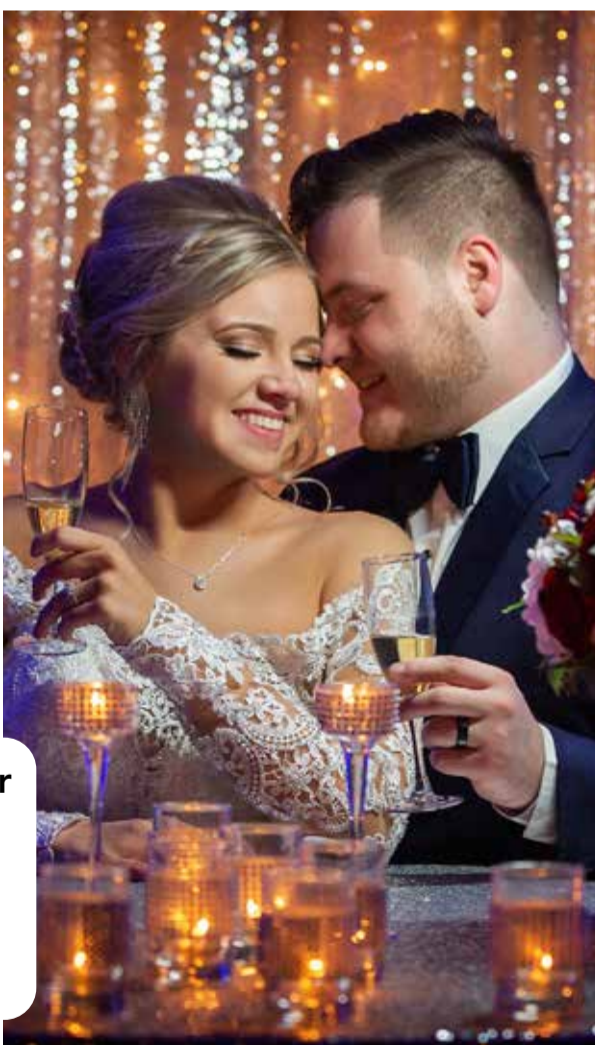


COMMUNITY

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COMMUNITY

Saginaw County names Brandi Buck as Commission on Aging director

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Saginaw County has appointed Brandi Buck as the new director of the Saginaw County Commission on Aging, with her tenure set to begin May 1.

Buck brings a background in health care leadership and education to the role, holding a master's degree in healthcare management. She previously worked with MyMichigan Health, formerly Ascension Health, as well as Michigan State University's College of Human Medicine.

In addition to her clinical and administrative experience, Buck has served as an adjunct instructor and program developer

at Delta College, contributing to workforce development and education in the region.

County officials say Buck's experience and community ties position her to lead the organization as it continues to serve older adults across Saginaw County. A lifelong resident of the area, she is expected to build on the Commission on Aging's longstanding efforts to support senior services and programs.

The Saginaw County Commission on Aging provides a range of services aimed at enhancing quality of life for seniors, including nutrition programs, transportation and wellness initiatives.



BRANDI BUCK (COURTESY PHOTO)

Buena Vista Township secures \$1.4M in state funding for housing improvements, new homes

BY MB STAFF

BUENA VISTA TWP., Mich. — Buena Vista Charter Township has been awarded more than \$1.4 million in state funding to support housing improvements and expand homeownership opportunities within the community.

The funding, totaling \$1,414,800, comes from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and will support two key initiatives: a home rehabilitation program and the development of new manufactured homes.

Officials said \$472,000 has been allocated for home rehabilitation projects aimed at helping existing homeowners complete critical upgrades. The program will fund improvements to both



BUENA VISTA CHARTER TOWNSHIP SIGN (FILE PHOTO)

interior and exterior spaces, including accessibility modifications to meet ADA standards. Individual projects are capped at \$9,999 per household.

Township officials reported receiving more than 40 applications for the rehabilitation program, with reviews currently underway. Residents selected for funding are expected to be notified of next steps in early May.

The remaining \$942,800 will support the placement of 10 new manufactured homes throughout the township as part of an effort to attract new residents and increase access to affordable housing. Officials said the homes will be available for purchase through the township.

Local leaders say the dual approach—investing in existing housing while adding new units—

aims to stabilize neighborhoods and encourage long-term community growth.

A public event is scheduled for May 21 at Buena Vista Township Hall, 3945 E. Holland Ave., where residents can learn more about the programs and receive updates. The event will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and include representatives from housing agencies, financial institutions and development partners.

The event will also include participation from the Buena Vista Charter Township Housing Commission and additional partners involved in the project.

Officials say the funding represents a significant step toward addressing housing needs in the township while supporting both current residents and future homeowners.

COMMUNITY

The UNSEEN MOTHER

She's not the one inside the frame, but standing just outside, the one who fixed your shirt, your hair, then quietly stepped aside. She called you close, she took the shot, made sure the moment stayed, but never thought to place herself in pictures that were made.

She wakes before the house can stir, before a sound is heard, and moves through rooms with practiced steps, without a single word. She checks the locks, she packs the bags, lays out what you will need, and solves the day's small problems long before they grow or lead.

She knows which child will lose their keys, who needs a little time, which teacher's name, which project's due, which worry's hard to find. She hears the change within your voice you try so hard to hide, and carries that unspoken weight like something tied inside.

She swallows down her tiredness, her thoughts she sets away, folding every feeling in between the tasks each day. She eats her meals in passing, standing still but never done, telling herself "just one more thing," until the day is gone.

She hears the door that closes hard, the silence stretched too thin, the short replies, the hidden tears you try to keep within, and though you say, "I'm fine," she knows there's more beneath the tone, and takes that worry on herself as if it were her own.

By night the house grows still at last, the noise begins to fade, but she is not yet finished with the plans she's always made. She sits and thinks through everything tomorrow might require, and pushes down her need for rest, her body worn and tired.

No one sees the weight she holds, how steady she appears, how she has learned to carry all the pressure, all the years, to keep the world from slipping while she fades just out of view—the unseen mother, holding life together just for you.



Smooth Jazz-n-R&B concert in Saginaw to benefit sickle cell awareness

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — A Mother's Day weekend concert in Saginaw will bring together music, community and philanthropy as organizers prepare for the 9th annual Smooth Jazz-n-R&B Benefit Concert supporting sickle cell awareness.

Hosted by Healthformation 4 U, the event is scheduled for Sunday, May 10, at the Horizons Conference Center, 6200 State St. Doors open at 3 p.m., with dinner beginning at 4 p.m. and the show set to start at 5 p.m.

This year's concert will feature Southern soul artist Ghost Ghoston, known for blending jazz, R&B and soul influences. Organizers say the event is designed to provide both entertainment and education while raising funds tied to sickle cell initiatives and community support efforts.

In addition to live music, attendees can expect a full evening of activities, including a dance floor, raffles, giveaways and a scholarship presentation. A cash bar will also be available, and guests are encouraged to wear western attire.

Tickets are priced at \$60 in advance and \$65 at the door. Proceeds from the event will support outreach efforts and programs focused on sickle cell awareness.

Tickets can be purchased by contacting Leon at 989-213-1972, James at 989-992-5309, or Betty at 989-714-9046. Payment options include Zelle and Cash App.

The annual concert continues to serve as a community gathering that blends entertainment with purpose, while also honoring mothers and families during the holiday weekend.

HEALTHFORMATION 4 U
PRESENTS
9TH 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

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- Scholarship Presentation • Western Attire Welcome

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DONATION
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9TH ANNUAL SMOOTH JAZZ-N-R&B BENEFIT CONCERT (COURTESY)

COMMUNITY

Flint & Genesee Group opens nominations for 40 Under 40 program



40 UNDER FORTY

40 UNDER FORTY (COURTESY)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Flint & Genesee Group has opened nominations for its 2026 40 Under 40 program, recognizing emerging leaders making an impact across the region.

The biannual program highlights 40 professionals under the age of 40 who demonstrate leadership in their careers and contributions to the Flint and Genesee County community. Honorees will be recognized in September through a special edition of AND, the organization's business

magazine.

Nominations must be submitted online by 11:59 p.m. June 5. Recipients will be selected by a committee of local business and community leaders.

Tim Herman, CEO of the Flint & Genesee Group, said the program reflects the strength of young professionals choosing to build their careers locally.

"We have an incredible community of young professionals who are making a real impact in their careers and across our region," Herman said. "They could take their talent anywhere, and

we're proud they continue to invest it here in Flint & Genesee."

To be eligible, nominees must be 39 or younger as of Dec. 31, 2026, and primarily work in Genesee County or maintain strong ties to the region through employment or community leadership. Candidates must also demonstrate leadership as a business owner, executive, manager or professional with measurable influence in their field or community.

The recognition is a one-time honor, and nominees must not have been selected in previous 40

Under 40 classes. Self-nominations are permitted but require a letter of support from an employer, supervisor, client or professional reference.

The 40 Under 40 program is part of ongoing efforts to highlight talent and leadership development in Genesee County, with past honorees representing a range of industries including business, education, health care and nonprofit work.

Nominations can be submitted through the organization's website, FlintandGenesee.org/40-under-40/.

HEALTH

Rx Kids expansion to reach more Michigan families with direct support for moms, infants



CMU HEALTH

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — A state-wide expansion of the Rx Kids program will bring direct financial support to thousands more Michigan families this summer, with new communities across the state set to launch the maternal and infant health initiative.

The program, led by Michigan State University, will expand to 20 additional communities, including locations in Calhoun, Genesee, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Muskegon and Wayne counties. The expansion builds on a broader effort to improve health outcomes for mothers and babies while addressing financial challenges during pregnancy and early infancy.

Originally launched in Flint

in 2024, Rx Kids has grown rapidly and is now operating in dozens of communities across Michigan. With the latest expansion, the program is expected to reach more than 60 communities statewide and support over 23,000 births each year.

The initiative provides direct cash assistance to families, including a one-time \$1,500 payment during pregnancy and \$500 monthly payments during a baby's first year. The funding is intended to help cover essential needs such as housing, transportation, diapers and access to prenatal care.

Enrollment for several communities will begin June 1, including areas in Kalamazoo County, the cities of Muskegon and Muskegon Heights, and the city of Jackson along with Black-

man Charter Township. Additional communities, including Albion, Battle Creek, Springfield and Sheridan Township, as well as areas in Kent County, are scheduled to open enrollment July 1.

Additional sites in Genesee County and Wayne County are expected to launch later this summer, with details to be announced.

The expansion follows a bipartisan state investment of \$250 million over three years, combined with federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funding and private contributions, to scale the program across Michigan.

Communities selected for the program were evaluated based on need, including factors such as child poverty rates, Medicaid

birth rates and maternal and infant health outcomes. Participating communities were also required to secure local matching support through partnerships with health systems, foundations, businesses and community organizations.

Rx Kids is administered by GiveDirectly and supported by local "community champions" that help lead outreach and engagement efforts. The program is designed as a place-based model to address financial instability during one of the most critical periods for families.

Early results from the program have shown improvements in financial stability for families, along with positive health outcomes for mothers and infants. The direct payments have also contributed to local economies, with spending supporting small businesses and community services.

Eligibility requires participants to be at least 16 weeks pregnant at the time of enrollment, with newborns required to be born after a community's official launch date.

State and local leaders say the expansion reflects a growing focus on early intervention and investment in families as a strategy to strengthen communities long-term.



HEALTH

Women's Wellness Expo in Flint to offer free health resources, food giveaway



(FROM LEFT) TERESA DAVISON, NICOLE MCCLELLAND, AMY PRATT, MELONIE DIEUGENIO, DR. DOMINIC BORGIALLI (COURTESY OF NEW PATHS)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — New Paths Inc. will host a free Women's Wellness Expo on May 20 at its Flint Township campus, bringing together health professionals and community organizations to provide resources focused on women's health and well-being.

The event is scheduled from noon to 6 p.m. and is open to women of all ages, from young adults to seniors. Organizers say the expo is designed to connect attendees with services that support preventive care, health education and overall quality of life.

Nearly 40 vendors are expected to participate, including representatives from health care systems, universities and community organizations. Participat-

ing agencies will offer information and services related to areas such as fertility, aging, nutrition, dental care, financial literacy, legal support and insurance.

Organizers say the goal is to create a centralized space where women can access a wide range of resources in one setting while connecting directly with local professionals.

In addition to health services, the event will include a grocery giveaway for attendees. The effort, organized in partnership with Team One Credit Union, will distribute food from a semi-truck to participants as they exit the event, with a focus on addressing food insecurity in the community.

The expo is being coordinated by a team of New Paths staff members, including health coordi-

ners, peer recovery professionals and medical staff, who have worked with local partners to assemble a broad network of participating organizations.

Planning efforts focused on identifying gaps in women's health services and creating an inclusive environment where at-

tendees can access support, information and community connections in one place.

New Paths officials say the Women's Wellness Expo reflects ongoing efforts to expand access to care and resources for women across Mid-Michigan.



THE GROCERY GIVEAWAY, WHICH HAS BEEN SPONSORED BY TEAM ONE CREDIT UNION, WILL BE HOSTED BY THE NEW PATHS FOOD PANTRY. (COURTESY OF NEW PATHS)

New oncology chairs at Saginaw infusion center aim to improve patient comfort during treatment

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Patients receiving cancer treatment in Saginaw are experiencing increased comfort during care following the installation of new infusion chairs at MyMichigan Medical Center Towne Centre.

The upgraded chairs, recently introduced in the chemotherapy and infusion services department, were made possible through community donations to the MyMichigan Health Foundation. Officials say the new equipment is designed to enhance the patient experience during lengthy treatment sessions.

The chairs feature ergonomic design, improved orthopedic support and built-in heating elements intended to help patients remain comfortable during chemotherapy and other infusion treatments, which can often last several hours.

A total of 11 chairs were purchased as part of the \$52,100 project, supported by contributions from local donors, including Dr. Penput Tangsintanapas and the MyMichigan Health Foundation Cancer Fund.

Health system officials say the investment reflects a broader effort to improve the environment of care for patients undergoing treatment in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

The MyMichigan Health Foundation said community support plays a key role in funding enhancements that directly impact patient care, with donations helping to advance comfort, accessibility and overall treatment experience.

Officials noted that patients undergoing infusion therapy



CARRIE HANAFIN, R.N., O.N.C., R.N., AT MYMICHIGAN CHEMOTHERAPY AND INFUSION SERVICES AT MYMICHIGAN MEDICAL CENTER TOWNE CENTRE TRIES OUT ONE OF THE NEW, STATE-OF-THE-ART RECLINERS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH DONATIONS TO THE MYMICHIGAN HEALTH FOUNDATION CANCER FUND. (COURTESY OF MYMICHIGAN)

often spend extended periods in treatment, making comfort-focused upgrades an important part of care delivery.

The MyMichigan Health Foundation continues to seek support for patient care initiatives across the region. Those in-

terested in contributing to programs at MyMichigan Medical Center Saginaw can contact the foundation for more information.

HEALTH

Tick season arrives early in Mid-Michigan; health officials urge precautions

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — An early start to tick season in Mid-Michigan has local health officials urging residents across the Great Lakes Bay Region and Flint area to take precautions as the risk of tick-borne illness increases.

Warmer-than-usual spring temperatures and mild winter conditions have contributed to increased tick activity earlier in the year, according to public health experts. Emergency room visits related to tick bites are already trending higher than typical for this time of year, raising concerns as residents spend more time outdoors.

In counties including Saginaw, Bay, Midland and Genesee, health officials are encouraging people to remain vigilant, particularly when visiting wooded areas, parks, trails and even residential backyards where ticks are commonly found.

Ticks in Michigan are known carriers of several diseases, most notably Lyme disease, which can cause symptoms such as fever, fatigue, headaches and a characteristic skin rash. If left untreated, the illness can lead to more serious complications affecting joints, the heart and the nervous system.

Local health departments emphasize that prevention remains the most effective defense.

Residents are advised to wear long sleeves and pants when in grassy or wooded areas, use insect repellent containing DEET or permethrin, and perform thorough tick checks after spending time outdoors. Pets should also be checked regularly, as they can carry ticks into the home.

Officials also recommend keeping lawns trimmed, removing leaf litter and creating barriers between wooded areas and yards to reduce tick habitats around homes.


Parents are being encouraged to take extra precautions with children, who may be more likely to play in areas where ticks are present. Camps, youth sports and outdoor school activities are

expected to increase exposure as the weather continues to warm.

Health experts say early detection is key. Ticks should be removed promptly using fine-tipped tweezers, and individuals who experience symptoms after a bite should seek medical attention.

While tick activity typically peaks during late spring and summer, the early start this year means the season could be longer than usual, increasing the likelihood of exposure.

Local officials stress that awareness and simple preventive steps can significantly reduce risk, allowing residents to safely enjoy outdoor activities throughout the region.



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EDUCATION

SVSU names Susan Smalling dean of health and human services college



SUSAN SMALLING (COURTESY OF SVSU)

BY MB STAFF

UNIVERSITY CENTER, Mich. — Saginaw Valley State University has selected Susan Smalling, a higher education leader and social work professional, as dean of its Crystal M. Lange College of Health and Human Services. Her appointment takes effect July 8.

Smalling currently serves at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, where she is associate dean for social sciences, director of faculty community and

belonging, and a professor of social work and family studies. In that role, she oversees more than 70 faculty members.

During her 14 years at St. Olaf, Smalling has contributed to initiatives aimed at strengthening both academic programs and campus culture. Her work has included general education curriculum revisions, development of institutional strategic plans, updates to Title IX policies, and efforts focused on equity and inclusion across campus systems.

Her academic scholarship centers on inclusive teaching

practices and pedagogy. Smalling also brings more than two decades of experience consulting and writing in the field, along with extensive classroom experience teaching across the social work curriculum. She has previously served as practicum coordinator and director of a Bachelor of Social Work program.

A licensed independent social worker, Smalling has 10 years of professional practice experience in adolescent behavioral health, child welfare and chemical health services.

She earned a bachelor's de-

gree from St. Olaf College, a master's degree in social work from the University of Minnesota Duluth, and a doctorate from Case Western Reserve University.

Smalling succeeds Marcia Ditmyer, who is retiring from the dean position and will remain on the SVSU faculty.

SVSU's Crystal M. Lange College of Health and Human Services offers programs that combine classroom instruction with clinical and fieldwork experience to prepare students for careers in health care and human services.

EDUCATION

Michigan Senate advances \$25.1B education budget amid party-line vote



MICHIGAN STATE CAPITOL (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — The Michigan Senate on Thursday advanced a \$25.1 billion education budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year, approving funding for K-12 schools, community colleges and universities along party lines.

Senate Bill 860, which outlines the state's main education appropriations, passed 19-18 with support from Democratic lawmakers and opposition from Republicans. The vote follows passage of a broader state spending plan, Senate Bill 878, approved Wednesday.

The proposal now moves into negotiations with the Michigan House of Representatives and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer before a final budget is adopted.

Under the Senate plan, total education spending would reach \$25.1 billion, including \$1.46 billion from the state's general fund. The proposal includes an increase in per-pupil funding and introduces a new weighted funding formula designed to provide more consistent and predictable funding for school districts.

State Sen. Darrin Camilleri, a Democrat from Trenton and chair of the Senate PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee,

said the plan prioritizes long-term investment in students and schools.

"That belief is at the core of our proposed education budget, which makes record investments in Michigan students and schools," Camilleri said. "From increasing per-pupil funding and literacy resources to implementing a new weighted funding formula that gives school districts the stability to make strategic, long-term plans — this budget reflects our commitment to giving every child the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed."

The proposal allocates \$235 million toward literacy initia-

tives, including funding for early literacy coaches, school libraries, LETRS training and curriculum support.

Additional funding includes incentives aimed at recruiting and retaining educators, along with \$300 million dedicated to school safety and student mental health. The funding is intended to help districts hire more counselors and social workers and upgrade building security systems.

Final details of the education budget will be determined through negotiations between the Senate, House and governor in the coming months.

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EDUCATION

How can Artificial Intelligence (AI) help?



BY CRAIG DOUGLAS

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly developing as a part of our collective lifestyle. Personally, I receive incoming calls daily from automated and pre-recorded messages generated by AI. Last fall I took several trips in riderless Toyotas piloted by AI. Some of this is fun and exciting; some is scary and flat-out irritating. Regardless, the pace of change is mind blowing, and AI is here to stay.

It begs the question; how can parents use Artificial Intelligence (AI) at home to help a child with learning?

The discovery is that AI is a tool to consider because all that is needed at home is a computer and Internet access. Here is what the AI tool, Chat gtp, has to say.

“Parents can use AI as a simple, effective tool to help close learning gaps by supporting—rather than replacing—their child’s thinking.

Start by identifying the specific area of difficulty, then use AI to explain concepts in clear, age-appropriate ways. It can generate extra practice problems, reading passages, or quizzes tailored to your child’s level, helping build skills gradually.

Encourage your child to use AI for guidance, not answers—asking for hints, step-by-step help, or feedback on mistakes. AI can also reinforce schoolwork by explaining concepts in different ways and supporting reading and writing through summaries, questions, and editing suggestions.

Short, consistent practice (10–15 minutes a few times a week) is more effective than long sessions. Parents should stay involved by asking their child to explain what they’ve learned and ensuring AI is used responsibly.



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 post-secondary 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 or email dsanchez@saginawpromise.org or telephone (989) 607-3428.

SPONSORED CONTENT

Support the Saginaw Promise 2026 Special events:

“Swinging for the Promise” Golf Event

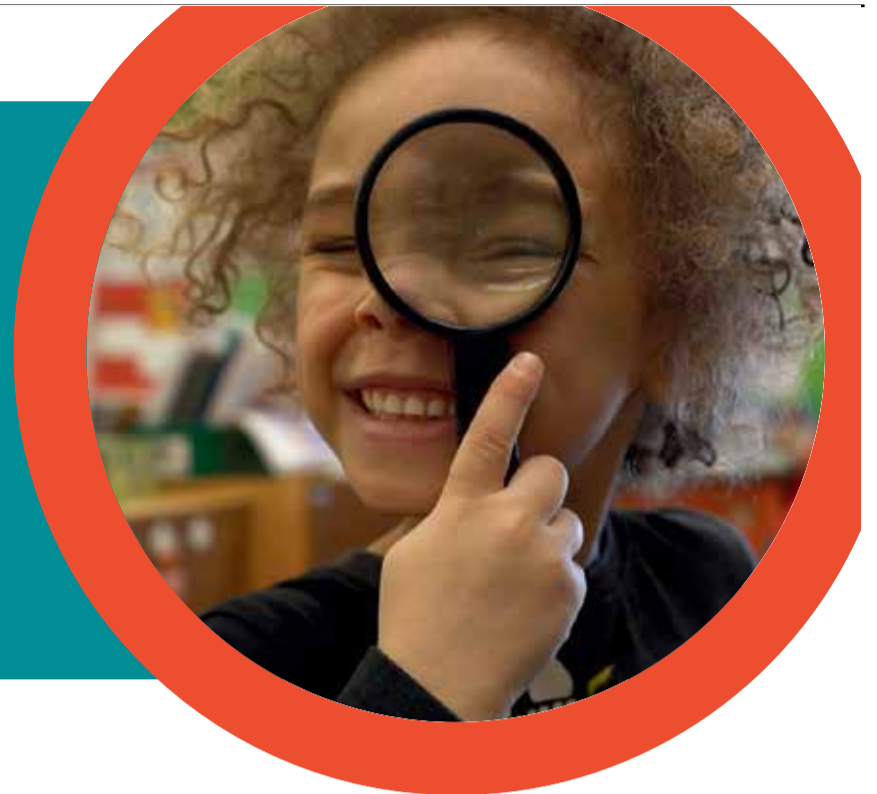
Saginaw Country Club
Thursday, August 13, 2026
10 AM

“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.*

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



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989-752-2193 for more information and apply today!

BUSINESS + FINANCE

Midland Planning Commission approves 78-unit apartment development



ILLUSTRATION OF A GENERIC APARTMENT BUILDING (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — The Midland Planning Commission has approved a 78-unit apartment development on the city's north side, advancing one of the first multifamily housing projects under updated zoning rules.

Commissioners voted 8-0 Tuesday to approve the project at 200 Joseph Drive following a public hearing. The vote came earlier than originally scheduled after the commission agreed to

waive standard procedure that would have delayed action until a later meeting.

The development, proposed by Fieldstone Reserve Apartments, LLC, will be built on vacant land between a credit union and a child care center, near the Midland Soccer Club complex. Plans call for a three-story building with 26 one-bedroom units and 52 two-bedroom units.

Project representatives said the proposal reflects recent changes to the city's zoning ordinance that allow residential

development in areas previously designated for commercial use. The site is located in a Regional Center district, where barriers to housing construction were recently reduced.

Local business leaders voiced support for the project during the public hearing, citing a continued need for workforce housing in the region. The development is expected to serve residents earning between 60% and 120% of the area median income, a range often identified as underserved in the housing market.

Commission members said the proposal aligns with the city's long-term planning goals and demonstrates early results from zoning updates intended to expand housing options. Several commissioners noted the location and scale of the project address an ongoing demand for mid-sized residential developments.

In a separate matter, the commission also held a public hearing on a proposed expansion of a manufacturing facility on James Savage Road. No vote was taken on that proposal.

BUSINESS + FINANCE

Panera Bread opens new location in Saginaw Township, adds jobs

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Panera Bread has opened a new restaurant in Saginaw Township, expanding its presence in the Great Lakes Bay Region and bringing new jobs to the area.

The bakery-cafe, located at 4738 State St., marks the second Panera location in the Saginaw area and the seventh in the broader market. Company officials said the new restaurant is expected to create between 25 and 30 jobs.



PANERA BREAD, 4738 STATE ST., SAGINAW MI (FILE PHOTO)

The opening was celebrated with a ceremonial baguette-breaking event, where the first guests received vouchers for

12 free “You Pick Two” meals, redeemable monthly over the course of a year.

Panera is also partnering with

local nonprofit organizations as part of its launch. Through June 30, the company plans to donate 30% of net sales from designated fundraising events to participating schools, sports teams and scout groups.

The restaurant will operate Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The new location reflects continued retail and restaurant growth in Saginaw Township, with businesses expanding offerings and employment opportunities across the region.

New brunch restaurant opens in Old Town Saginaw

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — A new brunch restaurant has opened in Old Town Saginaw, adding to the area’s growing small business and dining scene.

The Brunch Guy welcomed its first customers this week at its location on North Hamilton Street. The restaurant is operated by a husband-and-wife team that also owns The Bread Gal, located nearby.

The new venture aims to fill a gap in the local dining market by focusing on brunch offerings, combining traditional favorites with more creative menu options.

“We want everybody to feel a little celebration every time they come in,” owner Jacob Austin said. “It’s just a void we wanted to fill, and we know the community wanted it too.”

The concept grew from

the couple’s shared interest in brunch and their experience running a bakery business in the same neighborhood. The restaurant emphasizes a relaxed dining atmosphere and a menu centered on bold flavors

and specialty dishes.

“We are obsessed with brunch,” Austin said. “It was one thing that Saginaw was just missing.”

The Brunch Guy is open Tuesday through Sunday from 9 a.m.

to 2 p.m.

The opening reflects continued small business investment in Old Town Saginaw, where local entrepreneurs have expanded food and retail options in recent years.



THE BRUNCH GUY, 111 N HAMILTON ST, SAGINAW, MI (FB / THE BRUNCH GUY)

THE MICHIGAN BANNER IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AT&T

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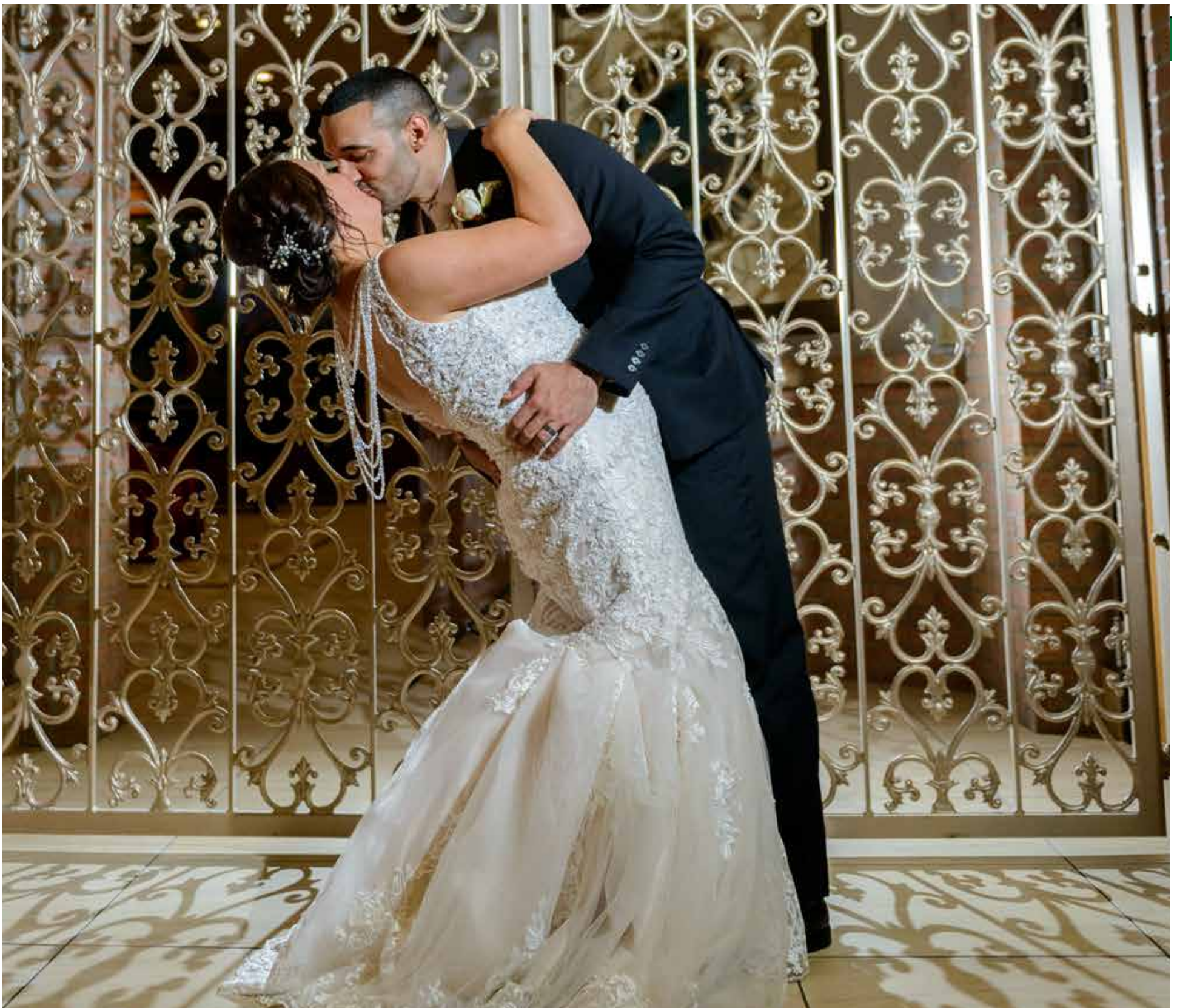
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SPORTS

Flint to honor national champion Trey McKenney with community celebration

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Community leaders and local organizations will honor Trey McKenney with a public celebration later this month, recognizing the Flint native's role in helping the Michigan Wolverines men's basketball secure the 2026 NCAA national championship.

The event, titled "Trey Day," is scheduled for May 14 at the Riverfront Conference Center and will run from 4 to 6 p.m., with doors opening at 3 p.m. Organizers said the event is open to the public and will include remarks from local officials and community leaders. Attendees will receive commemorative T-shirts while supplies last.

McKenney, a freshman shooting guard, earned Big Ten All-Freshman honors during his first season with the Wolverines. His performance contributed to the program's national title run, adding to a list of accomplishments that began during his high school career in Flint.

The event is being organized through a partnership that includes the University of Michigan-Flint, the City of Flint and Explore Flint & Genesee.

University of Michigan-Flint Chancellor Laurence B. Alexander said McKenney's success reflects the strength of the local community.

"Trey McKenney's rise to a national champion is a source of real pride for Flint and a powerful reminder of what this community produces," Alexander said.

Flint Mayor Sheldon Neeley said the recognition highlights



TREY MCKENNEY

both McKenney's achievements and his role as a community example.

"Trey McKenney is Flint strong," Neeley said. "His journey from our city to a national championship stage is proof that greatness lives here."

McKenney's basketball ré-

sumé includes representing the United States in international competition and winning a gold medal at the 2024 FIBA Under-18 AmeriCup. He was also named Michigan's Mr. Basketball and a McDonald's All-American in 2025.

Local tourism officials said

the event underscores Flint's long-standing reputation for producing high-level athletic talent.

The celebration is expected to draw residents, students and community supporters as the city recognizes one of its newest national champions.



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

Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame announces 2026 class

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame has announced its Class of 2026, a group that includes seven athletes, a longtime baseball coach, a state championship team and a community sports contributor.

The inductees were introduced Thursday, April 30, at the Castle Museum in Saginaw. The class includes Arthur Hill's Adam Emmenecker, Shameka Jackson and Melissa Leckie; Bridgeport's Greg Housner; Nouvel Catholic Central's Preston Murphy; Freeland's Rebecca McCann; Douglas MacArthur's Lawrence Day; baseball coach Steve Jaksa; the 1980 Eisenhower High School girls volleyball state championship team; and Ron Schauman, creator of the Freeland SportsZone.

The 24th annual induction banquet is scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 1, at Horizons Conference Center in Saginaw Township.

Doors open at 3 p.m., with the ceremony beginning at 4 p.m.

Emmenecker, a former Arthur Hill basketball standout, went on to play at Drake University, where he was named the 2008 Larry Bird Missouri Valley Conference Player of the Year after helping lead Drake to a regular-season conference title and national ranking.

Jackson, also from Arthur Hill, continued her basketball career at Alabama State University. She finished as one of the program's most accomplished scorers and was inducted into the Southwestern Athletic Conference Hall of Fame in 2017.

Leckie, another Arthur Hill product, played women's basketball at Indiana University after averaging 21 points and 10 rebounds per game in high school.

Housner, a Bridgeport High School baseball player, was drafted by the Kansas City Royals in the 37th round of the 1979 MLB

draft.

Murphy, a Nouvel Catholic Central basketball standout, played at Rhode Island and later built a coaching career that has included college assistant coaching stops at Rhode Island, Creighton and Alabama. He joined Alabama's staff in 2023 and helped the Crimson Tide reach the program's first Final Four in 2024.

McCann, a Freeland High School graduate, played women's basketball at the University of Iowa. Lawrence Day, a Douglas MacArthur graduate, is being honored for his accomplishments in swimming.

Jaksa is being recognized for a long baseball coaching career that included Nouvel Catholic



SAGINAW COUNTY SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Central, Central Michigan University and Saginaw Valley State University. At Nouvel, he won state championships in 1990 and 1997 before becoming one of Central Michigan's winningest coaches.

The 1980 Eisenhower High School girls volleyball team is being inducted after winning the Class B state championship. Schauman is being honored for his role in creating the Freeland SportsZone and his broader investment in the Freeland community.

Michigan Arsenal fall to Minnesota Monsters 45-25 in home opener

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — The Michigan Arsenal dropped its home opener Saturday night, falling 45-25 to the Minnesota Monsters at the Dow Event Center.

Minnesota set the tone early, jumping out to a 16-0 lead in the first quarter and extending its advantage to 31-13 by halftime. The Monsters built a commanding lead behind consistent offen-

sive execution, at one point going ahead 29-0 before Michigan found the end zone.

The Arsenal's first score came when quarterback Malik Henry connected with Javari Flowers for a touchdown, sparking a brief rally. Michigan cut into the deficit before halftime but was unable to sustain momentum against Minnesota's offense.

The Monsters continued to control the game in the second half, stretching the lead to

38-19 entering the fourth quarter. Michigan added late points, but the outcome remained out of reach as Minnesota secured the 20-point victory.

The game marked the return of arena football to Saginaw, drawing a local crowd for the team's first home appearance of the season. Despite the loss, the opener highlighted strong fan support and renewed interest in the franchise.

Michigan will look to rebound

in its next matchup on Saturday night against the Oregon Lightning at 7:00p.m.



Saginaw United

PARENT MEETING



MONDAY
4
MAY



Learn about the MHSAA NIL/PBA. As of January 27, 2026, the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) allows student-athletes to monetize their Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL)

- ✓ There are clear limits
- ✓ School staff cannot be involved
- ✓ Discuss important information

Monday, May 4th
Saginaw United Auditorium
6:00 PM

Michigan High School Athletes
Now Eligible for NIL Compensation **



FAITH IN FOCUS



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

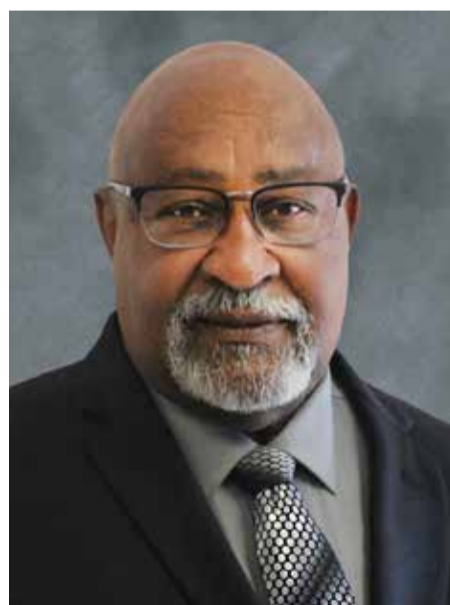
Ministry Without Walls expands vision with community-focused mission

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

What the Thief Took, Christ Restores

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"

John 10:10 KJV



BY MINISTER CAROLYN
CARTER TOWNSEL

John 10:10 presents a sobering yet powerful declaration about the reality of spiritual conflict and divine purpose. It states, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). This verse reveals two opposing forces at work in human experience - one that seeks to take away, and One that seeks to restore and give life abundantly.

The passage identifies a "thief," understood as any force opposed to God's will, operating through deception, destruction, and disruption. This force is described not as occasional, but intentional. Its pattern is consistent to steal what is valuable, to kill what has life, and to destroy what has purpose. In lived experience, this can be seen in the loss of peace, broken relationships, delayed purpose, emotional wounds, and the erosion of identity. As believers, if we are not careful oftentimes it is only in hindsight, that we realize that what was once whole has been gradually diminished over time.

In contrast, the latter part of the verse introduces the purpose and mission of Christ, who declares that He has come so that we - His children may have life and not just existence, but life in

abundance. This statement shifts the focus from what has been lost to what can be restored. It introduces the idea that loss is not the final word, and destruction is not the end of the story.

The contrast in this verse is intentional and striking. It sets before us a choice between depletion and fullness, between what is taken and what is given, between the work of the thief and the promise of Christ. The emphasis on "Abundant life" suggests wholeness, restoration, and a quality of life marked by peace, purpose, and divine fulfillment that extends beyond material or physical circumstances.

Beloved, ultimately, John 10:10 serves as both a warning and an invitation. It acknowledges the reality of loss and opposition, while simultaneously affirming that there is a greater authority at work offering restoration. It reframes life not as a passive experience of what is taken, but as an active journey toward what can be restored, reclaimed, and renewed through Christ.

Blessings to All,
Carolyn

Biblical mothers reflect faith, sacrifice and enduring love

BY MB STAFF

Motherhood in Scripture is rarely simple, rarely quiet and never insignificant. It is shaped by faith, sacrifice, waiting and resilience — often unfolding behind the scenes, yet central to God's story. From the first pages of the Bible to the life of Christ, mothers are woven into a narrative of endurance and hope.

At the beginning stands Eve, described as “the mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20). Her story carries both sorrow and promise. After the loss of her son Abel, she continued forward in faith, declaring at the birth of another son, “God has granted me another child” (Genesis 4:25). Eve's journey reflects a truth many mothers know — that even in grief, life continues, and hope can still take root.

Generations later, Sarah faced years of waiting. Once barren and advanced in age, she struggled to believe she would ever become a mother. Yet Scripture records, “The Lord was gracious to Sarah as he had said... Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age” (Genesis 21:1-2). What began as laughter of disbelief became laughter of joy. Her story speaks to those who wait, reminding them that timing does not limit God's promise.

The story of Hannah reveals a mother's deep longing poured out in prayer. “In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly” (1 Samuel 1:10). When her son Samuel was born, she fulfilled her vow, dedicating him back to God: “I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord” (1 Samuel 1:27-28). Hannah's story captures the essence of surrender — that motherhood is not owner-



MOTHER AND CHILD (FILE PHOTO)

ship, but trust.

In a moment of danger, Jochebed acted with courage and faith. To save her child, she placed him in a basket along the

Nile River (Exodus 2:3). That child, Moses, would go on to lead a nation. Jochebed's decision reflects the quiet strength of mothers who must trust God in cir-

cumstances beyond their control.

Motherhood in Scripture also extends beyond biology. Naomi, though grieving great loss, became a guiding force in the life of her daughter-in-law Ruth. Her words, “May the Lord deal kindly with you” (Ruth 1:8), reflect a nurturing spirit rooted in love and faith. Naomi's story affirms that motherhood can be expressed through mentorship, guidance and unwavering presence.

Perhaps the most recognized mother in Scripture is Mary. Her journey began with a calling she did not fully understand, yet she responded, “I am the Lord's servant... May your word to me be fulfilled” (Luke 1:38). She witnessed both the miracle of Christ's birth and the pain of His crucifixion. Still, she “treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2:19). Mary's life reflects the depth of a mother's love — one that endures both joy and sorrow.

These women represent more than moments in biblical history. Their lives reveal that motherhood is an act of faith — lived daily in quiet sacrifices, persistent prayers and unconditional love.

Scripture affirms this enduring role: “Her children arise and call her blessed” (Proverbs 31:28). It is a reminder that the impact of a mother is not always seen immediately, but it is lasting.

On this Mother's Day, these stories stand as a testament to the strength, resilience and faith of mothers — past and present. Their legacy continues in every woman who nurtures, guides and loves, shaping lives and communities in ways both seen and unseen.



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II Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:17



Banquet Celebration:
Friday, May 15, 2026

Horizons Conference Center – Saginaw, MI

Reception ~ 5:00 p.m.

Program ~ 6:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Rev. William James Wyne, Jr., Senior Pastor
Second Missionary Baptist Church, Battle Creek, MI

Please Contact the Church Office for Ticket Information - (989) 754-9621



Worship Service:

Sunday, May 17, 2026 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Zion Missionary Baptist Church

721 Johnson Street – Saginaw, MI

Guest Pastor: Rev. Jerry Love
Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, Pontiac, MI



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989-754-0801



Holy Communion Gospel Center

Pastor Charlene Washington
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989-752-3993



New Beginnings Ministries

Pastor Augustine Delgado
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newlife3881@gmail.com



Saint Paul Baptist Church

Rev. Dr., Vincent D. McMillon
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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.
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989-755-7692
victoriousbelievers.com



Bridgeport Community Church

Pastor Rob Ashmall
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Bridgeport, MI 48722
989-777-1840



New Covenant Christian Center

Pastor Ron Frierson
2395 S. Outer Drive
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989-752-8485



Anointed Temple Ministries

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



Bethel AME Church

Rev. Dr. Dennis Laffoon
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bethelame-saginaw.org



Zion Missionary Baptist Church

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FUNDRAISING GOOD TIMES

Overcoming the burden of your board



BY MEL AND PEARL SHAW

There are multiple lenses through which you can view the membership of your nonprofit board. One of these is the fundraising lens. Take time to consider whether the board you are involved with includes individuals with the skills, experience, relationships, and finances required to ensure the financial health of your organization or institution. Here are a few questions you can use to assess whether or not your board has the ability to secure the resources your nonprofit needs. You may feel uncomfortable asking some of these, but we encourage you to be brave and honest.

This assessment isn't easy. Sometimes leadership gives the board a pass and doesn't ask members to step up. The CEO, board chair, or the board as a whole may excuse board members from fundraising even though they know the nonprofit would be stronger if the board were engaged. The reasons are many and can range from "they didn't join the board to fundraise," to "I don't want to ask them to do too much." No matter the reason, the result is that your nonprofit is trying to "stumble to greatness over your board."

One of the first questions you want to ask is whether your board includes members with the



FILE PHOTO

ability to both give and ask others to give. You want members who are in a position to make a personally meaningful financial gift, and who can influence others to do the same. You want members who can pay their way when it comes to traveling to board meetings, purchasing tickets to events, and if your nonprofit is a college or university, you want board members who don't depend on the institution for free tickets to athletic events.

Ask whether your board includes people who can present new ideas and take the lead in bringing them to life. People who can take on a meaningful task; who are accessible; who believe in the mission, vision, goals, and priorities of your organization. Are board members capable of clearly communicating the value, vision, and impact

of your nonprofit, and how gifts and investments will make a difference? Are they able to meet on a regular basis? Are there enough members willing to be involved in raising 10% to 20% of your organization's annual budget? You want members who "rank" your nonprofit as one of the top three organizations they support financially and who will, ideally over time, include your nonprofit in their will or estate plan.

You need a core of board

members who can live up to these expectations. If you have too many members who can't or won't engage in fundraising, suggest that some consider taking on a different role where they can make an impact. You need volunteer leadership that can lead. Our nonprofit organizations no longer have the luxury of carrying individuals in "name only." The risk to our communities – and our country – is too great.



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PICS OF THE WEEK

On April 19, 2026, Trameka Rodgers held a grand opening for Heavenly Cakes mobile Dessert food truck. You can find the sweet treat business at local events. To learn more about her made-from-scratch offerings, visit www.facebook.com/Tcakelady or www.heavenlycakes.love.



Heavenly Cakes
A Taste of Heaven on Earth

May Schedule

May 2nd	Hats off to mom event at Horizons Conference Center Cinco De Mayo parade	
May 9th	Wolfheil Ace Hardware 5818 State Street 11-4	
May 16th	Wolfheil Ace Hardware 11-4	
May 20th	Court house 11am-2:30	
May 27th	Wolfheil Ace Hardware 11-4	

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