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Business, pg 36

# Michigan Banner announces 2026 Heart of the City award honorees



HEART OF THE CITY AWARDS (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Community leaders, volunteers, educators and advocates from across the Great Lakes Bay Region will be recognized June 4 during The Michigan Banner's 7th Annual Heart of the City Awards Banquet at Horizons Conference Center in Saginaw.

Hosted annually by The Michigan Banner, the event honors individuals and organizations whose leadership, volunteerism and service continue to strengthen communities throughout the region. The evening also marks The Michigan Banner's 24th anniversary of community-centered journalism and engagement.

Doors will open at 5 p.m., with the program beginning at 6 p.m. Guests will enjoy

a plated dinner, open bar, live entertainment and an evening celebrating those whose work continues to make a lasting impact across mid-Michigan.



DR. SAMUEL SHAHEEN (COURTESY PHOTO)

This year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Sam Shaheen, former president and CEO of Central Michigan University Medical Education Partners and president and CEO of Shaheen Development. His address, titled "Our Commu-

nity & The Medical Diamond: Saginaw and the Great Lakes Bay Region," will focus on collaboration between health care, education and community leadership in shaping the region's future.

Shaheen has played a major role in both medical education and economic development throughout the region. His leadership has included overseeing partnerships between CMU and Saginaw's two major hospital systems, Covenant HealthCare and MyMichigan Health-Saginaw, while also helping guide development projects along the Saginaw Riverfront, Uptown Bay City and Midland through Shaheen Development.

"The Heart of the City Awards are one of the most meaningful events we host each year," Jerome Buckley, founder of The Michigan Banner, said in a statement. "We are continually inspired by the extraordinary people who dedicate their time and talents to improving our community. This evening allows us to celebrate their work and encourage others to follow their example."

Recipients of the 2026 Heart of the City Awards include Billy Cork, Kevin Rooker, Patricia Lamar, and Willie and Mattie Thompson,

**Continues on pg 2, Heart of the City**



**National Teen Self-Esteem Month highlights growing mental health challenges facing young people**

YOUTH BANNER, COVER



**Latino population growth continues reshaping Saginaw demographics**

LATINO BANNER, COVER

## From cover, Heart of the City

who will receive the Heart of Gold Award; Christiana Malacara, recipient of the Outstanding Journalism Award; Carl Williams, recipient of the Lifetime Leadership Award; Elaine Gregory McKenzie and JoAnn Crary, recipients of the Visionary Award; Jenny Geno, recipient of the Impact Turnaround Award; Dwayne Parker, recipient of the Humanitarian Award; Lisa Coney and Rachel Caudy, recipients of the Outstanding Leadership Award; David Brown and Vince and Stephanie Agnew, recipients of the Motivation Award; Dr. Melvin McDowell, Frank and Charlie Haddad, and Mirza and Zaid Baig, recipients of the Outstanding Business Award; Alexandria Rene, Kelly Ellis, Kisha Smith and Phil Eich, recipients of the Community Involvement & Service Award; Lisa Coleman, recipient of the Outstanding Non-Profit Award; Lula Woodard, recipient of the Diversity Award; Augustine Delgado Sr. and Claudia Delgado, Demona Reed, and Pastor Taurus A. Simpson Sr. and Darlene Simpson, recipients of the Ministry of the Year Award; and Patricia Franklin-Lindsey, recipient of the Pioneer/Legacy Award.

The event will also recognize recipients of the 2026 Rae Lynn Tinsley-Buckley Scholarship, including Saginaw United High School students Amaria Tarver, Henri Daniels, Mel Washington and Zach Gilyard.

For more than two decades, The Michigan Banner has focused on highlighting stories and initiatives that impact diverse communities throughout Michigan. The Heart of the City Awards continues that mission by bringing together leaders, residents, nonprofits and businesses committed to uplifting the region through service and collaboration.

Tickets for the banquet are available at <https://michiganbanner.org/hoc>. Individual tickets are \$100, and reserved tables are available for \$640.



**THIS DAY IN  
MICHIGAN  
HISTORY**

**MAY 16, 1861**

On May 16, 1861, the 1st Michigan Infantry Regiment arrived in Washington, D.C., becoming the first western regiment to answer President Abraham Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops at the start of the Civil War. Upon their arrival, Lincoln reportedly exclaimed, "Thank God for Michigan."

The 1st Michigan Infantry, the state's only three-month regiment, was mustered into service May 1, 1861, and included the Detroit Light Guard. The regiment fought in the Battle of Arlington Mill and later saw heavy losses at the First Battle of Bull Run, where 117 men were killed, wounded or captured. Their commander, Col. Orlando Willcox, was also captured before later being released in a prisoner exchange.

The regiment was mustered out Aug. 7, 1861, though many soldiers reenlisted in the three-year regiment that followed.



**MICHIGAN BANNER**

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**MISSION**

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

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

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Preferred format: Jpeg or PDF

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**THE MICHIGAN BANNER**

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# MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER

VOLUME 8 • NUMBER 10



## National Teen Self-Esteem Month highlights growing mental health challenges facing young people



TEEN SUPPORT MEETING (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — May is recognized as National Teen Self-Esteem Month, a time focused on encouraging young people to build confidence, protect their mental health and understand their value beyond social media likes, grades or outside opinions.

For many teens, that message matters more than ever.

Recent federal data shows mental health struggles among teenagers continue to affect millions of students across the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that 40% of high school students experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. About

20% seriously considered suicide, and nearly 1 in 10 attempted suicide.

Mental health experts point to several causes, including academic pressure, bullying, anxiety about the future, family stress and the nonstop influence of social media.

Teenagers today are growing up in a world where comparison is constant. Apps designed to connect people can also create pressure to look perfect, act perfect and succeed all the time.

Research from Pew Research Center found that many teens believe social media negatively affects people their age, especially when it comes to confidence, body image and sleep.

Sleep itself has become an-

other growing concern. Studies continue to show American teenagers are sleeping less than previous generations, with stress, screen time and packed schedules contributing to exhaustion and burnout among students.

Mental health advocates say self-esteem is not about being perfect or pretending problems do not exist. Instead, they encourage teens to recognize their strengths, ask for help when needed and understand that struggling does not make someone weak.

Experts say small habits can make a difference, including limiting screen time, getting enough sleep, spending time with supportive friends and talking openly about stress and anxiety.

In the Great Lakes Bay Region and Flint, several organizations offer free or low-cost support services for teens and families facing mental health challenges.

In Saginaw County, the Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority provides youth counseling, crisis intervention and family support services. Flint-based Genesee Health System also offers mental health programs for adolescents, including crisis care and school-based support.

Bay-Arenac Behavioral Health serves Bay and Arenac counties with youth mental health resources, while the Midland Area Community Foundation and local school districts continue expanding student wellness initiatives and peer support programs.

Teens in crisis can also contact or text the national 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at any time for immediate confidential support.

Mental health professionals say one of the most important things teens can remember is that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

National Teen Self-Esteem Month also serves as a reminder that confidence is not built overnight. It grows through support systems, healthy relationships and learning to value yourself even on difficult days.

As students prepare for the end of the school year, advocates encourage teens across Michigan to remember that grades, followers and outside opinions do not define their worth.

# Flint to host Teen Resource Fair connecting youth with jobs, IDs and community support

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Young people in Flint will have an opportunity to connect with jobs, educational resources, health services and important documents during an upcoming Teen Resource Fair hosted in the city later this month.

The event is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday, May 27, at the McKinley Center, 249 Peer Ave. in Flint.

Organizers say the fair is designed to help bridge gaps for local youth by connecting teens with community organizations, employment opportunities and support services in one location.

Resources available during the event are expected to include state identification services through the Michigan Secretary of State's office, birth certificate assistance from Genesee County, financial account setup assistance through Financial Plus and public health resources provided by the Genesee County Office of Public Health.

Community groups, educational organizations and employers will also be present to provide information and opportunities for young people preparing for summer jobs, graduation and future career planning.

City officials said the event is focused on helping teens build connections while gaining access to services that can support long-term success.

The fair comes as communities across Michigan continue addressing growing concerns surrounding teen mental health, economic opportunity and youth engagement. Advocates say access to identification documents, banking services, employment resources and mentorship programs can play an important role in helping teens feel supported and prepared for adulthood.

The event is open to local youth and families throughout the Flint area.

Additional information is available by contacting 810-410-2020 or emailing [llewis@cityofflint.com](mailto:llewis@cityofflint.com).

## Teen RESOURCE FAIR

Join us at our resource fair for young people in the **City of Flint** to bridge gaps, build connections and enjoy an afternoon of fun and opportunities!

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 27**  
**10AM – 5PM**  
**McKINLEY CENTER**  
249 Peer Ave. Flint

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE ON-SITE INCLUDE:**

- Secretary of State issuing State IDs
- Genesee County issuing Birth Certificates
- Financial Plus opening bank accounts
- Office of Public Health providing health resources
- Community organizations
- Education resources
- Employment opportunities & more!

**CONTACT US!**

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FLINT TEEN RESOURCE FAIR (FILE PHOTO)

# Flint youth summit to spotlight teen entrepreneurship, leadership and community impact

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Teens in Flint will have an opportunity to showcase their talents, connect with mentors and explore entrepreneurship during the upcoming Youth Empowerment Entrepreneur Summit and Pop-Up Shop later this month.

The event, organized by Sisters Supporting Sisters and Men Motivating Men Worldwide, is scheduled from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, May 31, at the Brownell Elementary School gym, 6302 Oxley Drive in Flint.

Organizers describe the summit as a “Teen Takeover” focused on encouraging leadership, creativity and business development among young people in the community.

The event will feature youth vendors, a pop-up shop, networking opportunities, live teen panel discussions, music and prize giveaways. Teens attending will also have opportunities to connect with peers, entrepreneurs and community leaders.

A major part of the summit includes youth recognition awards honoring students and young leaders in several categories, including Youth Entrepreneur, Community Impact, Creative Excellence, Resilience and Peer Inspiration.

Organizers also announced a \$200 cash grand prize for the best video submission connected to the event.

Community advocates say youth-focused programs centered on entrepreneurship and mentorship are becoming increasingly important as teens face growing pressures tied to mental health, economic uncertainty and academic stress.

Events like the Youth Empowerment Summit aim to provide positive spaces where young people can build confidence, develop career interests and connect with supportive role models.

The summit is supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation as part of the organization’s continued investment in youth engagement and community development efforts in Flint.

Additional information about the event is available by calling 810-771-3863 or 989-824-3121.

**SISTERS SUPPORTING SISTERS & MEN MOTIVATING MEN PRESENT**

**Men Motivating Men Worldwide**

**Sisters Supporting Sisters Worldwide**

**YouTh Empowerment**

**ENTREPRENEUR SUMMIT & POP-UP SHOP**

*Teen Takeover*  
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**GIVEAWAY ALERT**

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at the  
**YouTh Empowerment SUMMIT!**

**MAY 31ST • 3PM-6PM**

**BROWNELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYM**  
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**AWARD CATEGORIES:**

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- ★ Community Impact Award
- ★ Creative Excellence Award
- ★ Resilience Award (powerful story)
- ★ Peer Inspiration Award

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Winners will be announced **LIVE** on May 31st!

**WHERE ENCOURAGEMENT FUELS ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR TEENS**

For more information call:  
**810-771-3863 | 989-824-3121**

EVENT SUPPORTED BY: **CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION | 100 YEARS**

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT ENTREPRENEUR SUMMIT (FILE PHOTO)

# Four Saginaw United seniors awarded Rae Lynn Tinsley-Buckley journalism scholarship

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Four Saginaw United High School seniors have been selected as recipients of the 2026 Heart of the City Rae Lynn Tinsley-Buckley Scholarship of Journalism, an award recognizing students who demonstrate leadership, communication skills and community engagement through storytelling and journalism.

The scholarship was established in 2017 by Jerome Buckley in honor of his late wife, Rae Lynn Tinsley-Buckley, former co-owner and editor of The Michigan Banner News.

Rae Lynn Tinsley-Buckley, who died in 2015, was widely recognized for her dedication to journalism and community outreach throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region. In addition to serving as editor of The Michigan Banner News, she founded Michigan Banner Outreach and remained active in community service efforts for many years.

She earned a bachelor's degree in business management from Saginaw Valley State University and was pursuing a master's degree in journalism before her passing. After a long career with State Farm Claims, she devoted much of her time to local journalism and community advocacy.

The scholarship supports high school students in the Great Lakes Bay Region who plan to pursue a college degree or trade certification through an accredited institution.

This year's scholarship recipients are Henri Daniels, Zachary Gilyard, Melchizedek Washington and Amaria Tarver.

Henri Daniels plans to attend Saginaw Valley State University. During his time at Saginaw United, he served as an anchor for the S.U.N. Network, also known as



FROM TOP LEFT: AMARIA TARVER AND HENRI DANIELS; BOTTOM LEFT: MELCHIZEDEK "MEL" WASHINGTON AND ZACHARY "ZACH" GILYARD, RECIPIENTS OF THE 2026 HEART OF THE CITY RAE LYNN TINSLEY-BUCKLEY SCHOLARSHIP OF JOURNALISM. (COURTESY PHOTOS)

Saginaw United News, where he developed communication, leadership and broadcast journalism skills.

Zachary Gilyard plans to continue using the communication and public speaking skills he developed through journalism studies after high school. School officials said his experience helped strengthen his confidence as both a storyteller and student leader.

Melchizedek Washington will attend Olivet College. His journalism-related experience included participation in a multimedia production of "The Creation," where he demonstrated leadership, confidence and stage presence.

Amaria Tarver plans to attend Saginaw Valley State University and has expressed interest in journalism, communications and creative media. Educators

described her passion for storytelling and community impact as qualities that align closely with the mission of the scholarship.

The students will be recognized during the Heart of the City event scheduled for June 4, 2026, at the Horizons Conference Center in Saginaw. For more information about the event, visit <https://michiganbanner.org/hoc>.

# Michigan launches youth workers' rights initiative aimed at workplace safety and education



TEEN WORKING AT A CAFÉ (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity has launched a new statewide initiative designed to help young workers better understand their workplace rights, safety protections and employment laws before entering the workforce.

The Youth Workers' Rights Initiative focuses on preparing teens and young adults with information and resources aimed at promoting safe and successful work experiences across Michigan.

The initiative includes educational tools intended to help

young workers recognize unsafe or unlawful workplace situations, understand wage and labor protections, and learn how to report concerns or seek assistance when problems arise on the job.

The program is supported through partnerships involving the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Wage and Hour Division, educators and community organizations throughout the state.

State officials said the effort comes as increasing numbers of teenagers and young adults enter the workforce through part-time jobs, internships, seasonal employment and career training programs.

The initiative also aims to educate employers, schools and families about labor laws involving minors, workplace safety requirements and youth employment protections.

Resources available through the program include information on wage standards, work permits, hazardous job restrictions, discrimination protections and workplace injury prevention.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, young workers are more likely to experience workplace injuries than older employees due to limited job experience and lack of safety training. Federal labor data shows thousands of workers under age

24 are injured on the job each year nationwide.

Michigan's initiative arrives amid growing national attention surrounding youth employment protections and workplace safety education for teens.

The Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity said the program is intended to help create a stronger future workforce by ensuring young employees understand both their rights and responsibilities before beginning employment.

Additional information and educational resources are available through the state's Youth Employment website, <https://mi.gov/youthemployment>.

Tuesday-Wednesday  
**June 23-24, 2026**

Early arrivals Monday, June 22

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# Latino Banner

LIDER EN LA  
DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE

## Latino population growth continues reshaping Saginaw demographics



CARMELITA'S FAMILY STORE, 2365 S MICHIGAN AVE, SAGINAW, MI (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — From Latino-owned restaurants and small businesses to expanding bilingual programs in local schools, Saginaw's growing Hispanic popula-

tion has continued reshaping the city's cultural and economic identity over the past two decades.

According to U.S. Census data, Hispanic and Latino residents made up approximately 15.8% of Saginaw's population

in 2020. That marks a steady increase from 14.3% in 2010 and 11.7% in 2000.

Saginaw County's Hispanic and Latino population has also increased, accounting for roughly 9% of county residents based on recent Census estimates.

The demographic changes are visible throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region, including increased bilingual services, Latino-owned businesses and growing Hispanic student populations in local schools.

Data from the Michigan Department of Education shows Hispanic enrollment has steadily increased in districts across Mid-Michigan over the last several years. Schools have expanded English learner services, bilingual communication efforts and multicultural programming to support students and families.

Saginaw's Hispanic population is primarily made up of residents with Mexican heritage, though Census data and local demographic reports show continued growth among Puerto Rican and Central American families as well.

Latino-owned businesses have become increasingly visible throughout Saginaw, including restaurants, grocery stores, construction companies, salons and small retail businesses.

The city's changing demographics also reflect broader statewide trends. Michigan's Hispanic population grew by nearly 32% between 2010 and 2020, according to U.S. Census figures, making Latinos one of the fast-

est-growing demographic groups in the state.

At the same time, Saginaw's total population has declined. Census data shows the city's population fell from nearly 62,000 residents in 2000 to approximately 44,000 residents in 2020. Despite the overall decline, the percentage of Hispanic and Latino residents continued rising during that period.

Recent years have also brought expanded Latino cultural events, bilingual outreach efforts and increased visibility of Hispanic organizations throughout Mid-Michigan.

The growth has been particularly noticeable among younger residents. Census age data shows Hispanic populations in Michigan tend to be younger on average than the state's overall population, contributing to continued enrollment growth in local schools and youth programs.

Economic data also shows Latino entrepreneurship continuing to expand statewide. The Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce reported growth in Hispanic-owned businesses across multiple industries, including food service, construction, logistics and professional services.

As demographic trends continue shifting, the Latino community is expected to remain an increasingly important part of Saginaw's economic, educational and cultural future.

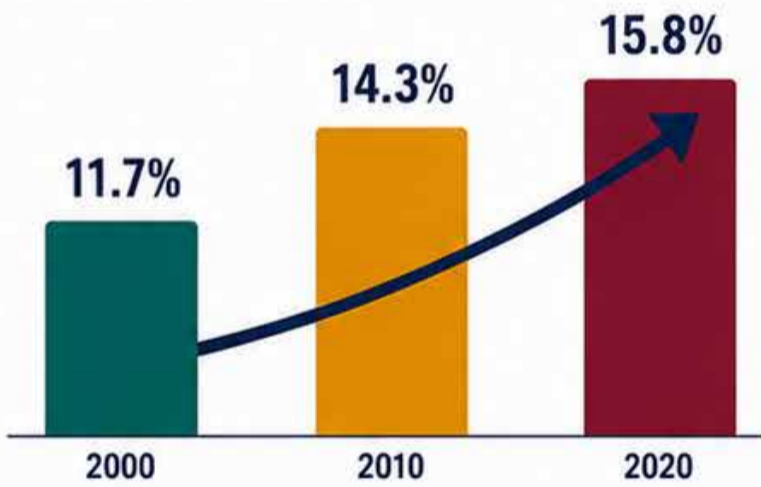
THE LATINO BANNER IS PROUDLY SPONSORED BY GREAT LAKES BAY HEALTH CENTERS



# Saginaw's growing Latino Population

## GROWTH IN SAGINAW'S HISPANIC/LATINO POPULATION

Percentage of total population



Hispanic and Latino residents made up approximately **15.8%** of Saginaw's population in 2020.



In Saginaw County, Hispanic and Latino residents account for roughly **9%** of the population.

### A STATEWIDE TREND

Michigan's Hispanic population grew by nearly **32%** between 2010 and 2020, making Latinos one of the fastest-growing demographic groups in the state.

### POPULATION CHANGE IN SAGINAW

Total population in 2000: **~62,000**

Total population in 2020: **~44,000**

Despite the overall population decline, the percentage of Hispanic and Latino residents continued to rise.



## SAGINAW'S FUTURE IS DIVERSE AND GROWING

As the Latino community continues to grow, its contributions will remain vital to Saginaw's economic, educational and cultural future.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2000, 2010, 2020 Decennial Census) | U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Saginaw City, Michigan; Saginaw County, Michigan

# Trump's approval rating declines among Latino voters as economic concerns grow

BY MB STAFF

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's approval rating among Latino voters has fallen to some of the lowest levels of his second term, according to multiple recent national polls, though a sizable share of Hispanic voters continue supporting the president on issues including border security and immigration.

The shift comes after Trump made historic gains among Latino voters during the 2024 presidential election.

National exit polling conducted by Edison Research found Trump won approximately 46% of Latino male voters and 38% of Latino voters overall in 2024 — a significant increase from his support levels in previous elections. In 2016, Trump received about 28% of the Latino vote nationally. In 2020, that number increased to roughly 32%.

Recent Reuters/Ipsos polling released in 2025 found Trump's approval rating among Hispanic Americans dropped to 34%, down from roughly 43% shortly after his return to office. Additional polling conducted in early 2026 showed continued declines tied largely to concerns about inflation, housing costs and economic instability.

A February 2026 Reuters/Ipsos poll found only 31% of Hispanic respondents approved of Trump's handling of inflation, while 57% disapproved. The same survey found 36% approved of his handling of the economy overall.

Housing affordability has emerged as one of the largest issues affecting Latino households nationwide. U.S. Census and housing data show Hispanic renters spend a higher percentage of household income on housing costs compared with white households in many urban



MAN IN VOTING BOOTH (FILE PHOTO)

areas.

Immigration policy remains one of the most politically divided issues among Latino voters.

Reuters/Ipsos polling from January 2026 found Trump's approval rating on immigration among Hispanic voters fell to 39%, the lowest level recorded among Latinos during his second term at that time. The survey also found growing concerns surrounding workplace raids and expanded deportation efforts.

Despite those declines, polling continues to show many Latino voters support stricter border enforcement policies. Pew Research Center surveys conducted after the 2024 election found Hispanic voters were increasingly divided politically, particularly among younger men and work-

ing-class voters.

Economic opportunity and public safety remain major priorities for many Latino voters. AP VoteCast data from the 2024 election found inflation and the economy ranked among the top concerns for Hispanic households nationally.

Political analysts have increasingly described Latino voters as one of the country's most influential swing voting blocs rather than a reliably Democratic constituency.

The political shift has become increasingly important in battleground states with rapidly growing Hispanic populations, including Arizona, Nevada, Texas and Florida.

Michigan's Hispanic population has also continued growing

steadily. U.S. Census estimates show more than 550,000 Hispanic and Latino residents now live in Michigan, accounting for approximately 5.5% of the state's population. Hispanic populations have expanded in Detroit, Grand Rapids, Flint, Lansing and Saginaw over the past decade.

In Saginaw, Hispanic and Latino residents made up approximately 15.8% of the city's population in the 2020 Census, compared with 11.7% in 2000.

Both political parties are expected to intensify outreach efforts toward Latino voters ahead of the 2026 midterm elections as economic concerns and immigration policy continue shaping voter attitudes nationwide.



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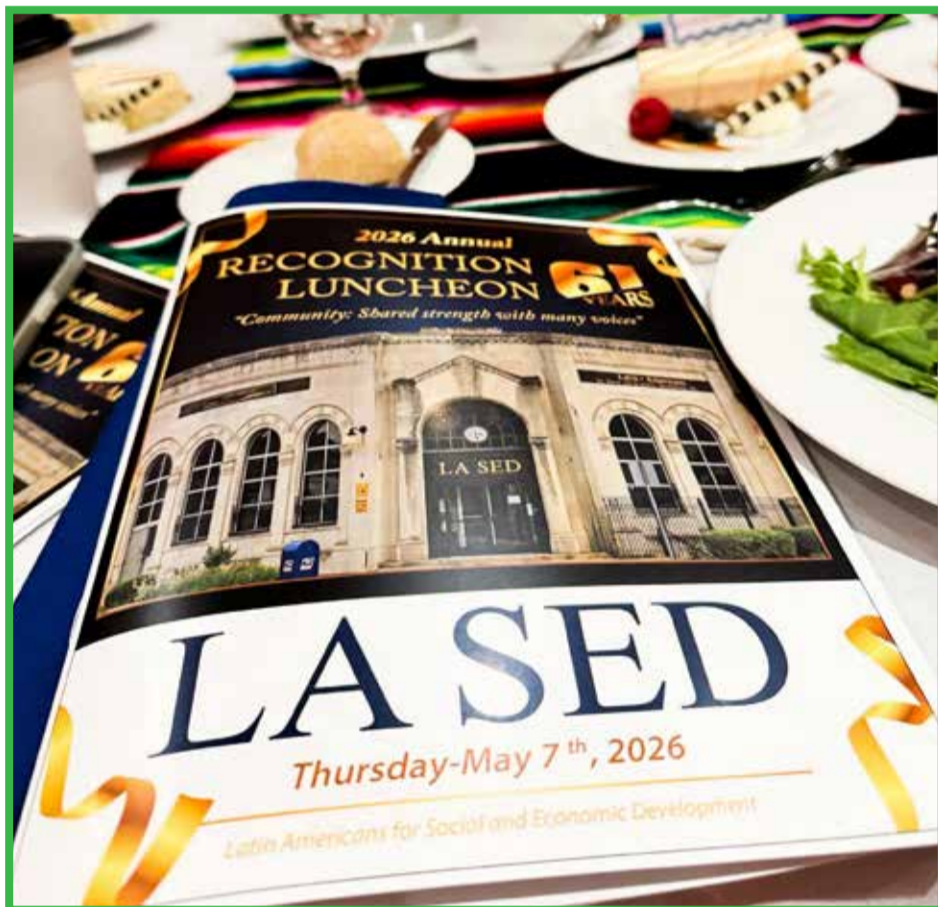
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5925 STATE ST, SAGINAW, MI 48603  
SALES: 989-683-4697

**SEEN ON THE SCENE:** Attendees gather during the Latino Americans for Social and Economic Development annual recognition luncheon May 7, 2026, celebrating 61 years of community service, cultural impact and advocacy in Detroit. The event honored the organization’s longstanding commitment to empowering Latino communities across Michigan.



# Oakley Village Council votes to rescind ICE cooperation agreement amid public backlash



VILLAGE OF OAKLEY SIGN (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

OAKLEY, Mich. — The Oakley Village Council voted May 13 to rescind its 287(g) agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, temporarily ending the village police department's participation in a federal immigration enforcement partnership that had drawn statewide attention and public criticism.

The agreement was originally approved earlier this spring by the village's one-person police department, making Oakley one of the first municipalities in Michigan in recent years to enter into the federal 287(g) program.

Michigan Advance first reported March 30 that Oakley had signed the agreement with ICE, marking the first known 287(g) agreement entered into by a Michigan law enforcement agency since November 2025.

The 287(g) program allows selected local law enforcement officers to receive federal training and perform limited immigration enforcement duties in coordination with ICE.

Oakley, located in Saginaw County, has a population of fewer than 300 residents.

The agreement quickly generated backlash from immigrant rights advocates, civil rights groups and community members across Michigan who argued the partnership could create fear within immigrant communities and damage trust between residents and local law enforcement.

Public criticism intensified throughout April and early May through community organizing efforts, social media campaigns and calls for the village to reverse the agreement.

ABC12 reported May 12 that the Oakley Village Council was

considering a measure to end the agreement following mounting public pressure.

During the May 13 meeting, the council voted to rescind the agreement "for now," according to community organizers and public meeting reports shared online after the vote.

The decision does not permanently prevent the village from reconsidering participation in the program in the future.

The 287(g) program has remained controversial nationally for years.

Supporters argue the agreements improve cooperation between local police and federal immigration authorities while helping identify undocumented immigrants accused of crimes.

Opponents argue the program can increase racial profiling concerns, discourage immigrants from reporting crimes and create

fear in Hispanic and immigrant communities.

ICE data shows more than 150 law enforcement agencies nationwide currently participate in some form of the 287(g) program.

The Oakley agreement drew additional attention because Michigan historically has had relatively few local law enforcement agencies participating in formal ICE enforcement partnerships compared with states along the southern border and parts of the South.

The debate surrounding the agreement comes as Michigan's Hispanic population continues growing statewide. U.S. Census estimates show more than 550,000 Hispanic and Latino residents now live in Michigan, including expanding populations in Saginaw County and throughout Mid-Michigan.

## COMMUNITY

# Saginaw County Chamber launches first Community Impact Day



VOLUNTEERS POSE FOR A PHOTO DURING SAGINAW COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S COMMUNITY IMPACT DAY ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 13 (COURTESY OF SAGINAW COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE)

## MY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Volunteers spread across Saginaw on May 13 as the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce launched its first Community Impact Day, a local service effort designed to connect business and community volunteers with nonprofit organizations needing hands-on support.

The volunteer event ran from 1 to 4 p.m., with teams completing projects for participating nonprofits, including the Boys & Girls Club, Hidden Harvest and the Saginaw Art Museum. The day ended with an appre-

ciation celebration at 4:15 p.m. at the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce parking lot, 515 N. Washington Ave., where volunteers and nonprofit partners gathered for networking, a cook-out and refreshments.

The Saginaw event was modeled after the Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce's Community Impact Day, a service initiative that has expanded into a broader statewide chamber effort. Participating chambers across Michigan scheduled Community Impact Day events on May 13 to mobilize volunteers in support of nonprofits, schools, churches and community groups. The statewide model encourages

projects such as beautification, landscaping, food pantry organization, painting, repairs and cleanup work.

The chamber organized the local effort to direct volunteers toward essential projects for nonprofit organizations within its membership. The event reflects a growing trend among chambers of commerce that are expanding beyond traditional business networking to include visible community service, civic engagement and nonprofit support.

Community Impact Day also gave local employers an opportunity to involve staff members in volunteer work during the business day. Group service proj-

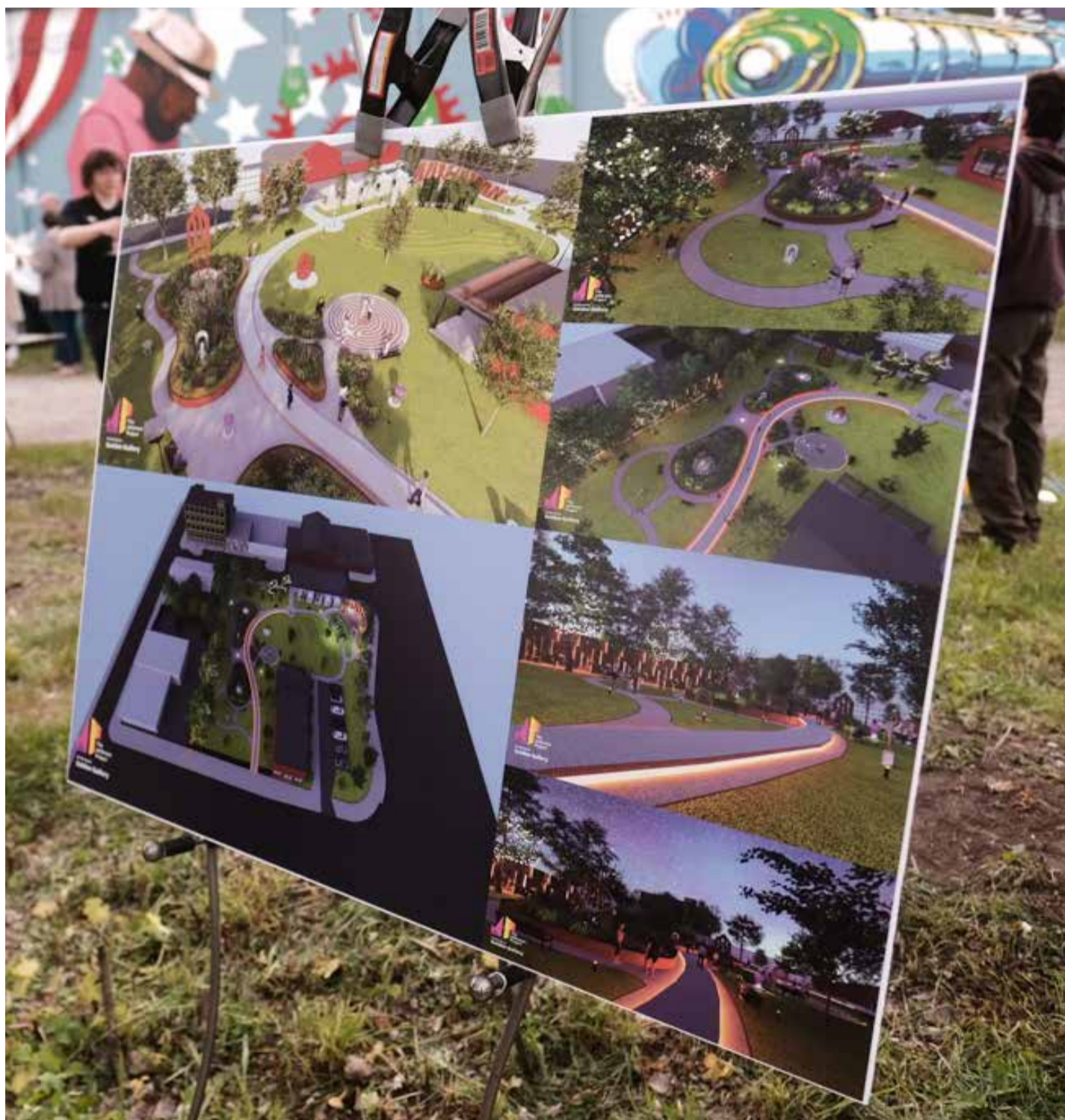
ects can help smaller nonprofits complete tasks that may be difficult to finish with limited staff or funding.

For Saginaw, the inaugural event created a shared day of service at a time when nonprofits continue responding to needs involving youth services, food access, arts programming and neighborhood support.

The chamber's first Community Impact Day adds another community-centered event to the Great Lakes Bay Region calendar and could become an annual opportunity for local businesses, nonprofits and volunteers to work together on visible improvements across Saginaw.

## COMMUNITY

# Jefferson Project breaks ground on Bay City sculpture garden and park



RENDERINGS OF THE JEFFERSON PROJECT SCULPTURE PARK & GARDEN SHOWN AT THE PARK'S GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY ON FRIDAY, MAY 15  
(PHOTO CREDIT: THE JEFFERSON PROJECT/THOR\*TOGRAPHY)

## MY MB STAFF

BAY CITY, Mich. — The Jefferson Project is moving forward with plans for a new Sculpture Garden & Park in Bay City, marking another step in the organization's effort to expand public art, community gathering

space and creative development downtown.

A groundbreaking ceremony was scheduled for May 15 at the project site, located at 1317 N. Madison Ave. near Woodside Avenue. The park is planned as a green space featuring a lighted walkway, landscaped garden, outdoor art gallery, amphi-

theater and market area where people can gather, create and perform.

The public event began with property tours at 9:45 a.m., giving attendees a look at the planned layout and locations for the walkway, outdoor gallery and amphitheater. Refreshments were scheduled for 10:30

a.m., along with the unveiling of work by welding students, plants provided by agricultural students and distribution of messenger bags created by Jefferson Warehouse artists. A presentation and panel discussion were scheduled for 11 a.m., followed by the groundbreaking at 11:25 a.m. with Serenus Johnson Construction.

The Jefferson Project is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that relies on grants and community donations. The organization currently hosts programs and events including the Third Street Star Bridge, Raise a Flag Bay City, Jefferson Street Live and the Bay Area Farmers Market.

The sculpture garden is part of a larger vision to transform The Jefferson Project into an art and technology innovation center in downtown Bay City. Plans described by the organization include first-floor manufacturing and industrial space, a photography studio and display area, an innovation and technology lab with 3D printers, studio housing for students pursuing Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees and an outdoor night market connected to the sculpture park and garden.

The project adds to ongoing efforts in Bay City to use arts, placemaking and public spaces as tools for community connection and downtown activity. Once completed, the Sculpture Garden & Park is expected to provide a new venue for artists, students, residents and visitors to gather around public art, performances, markets and community programming.

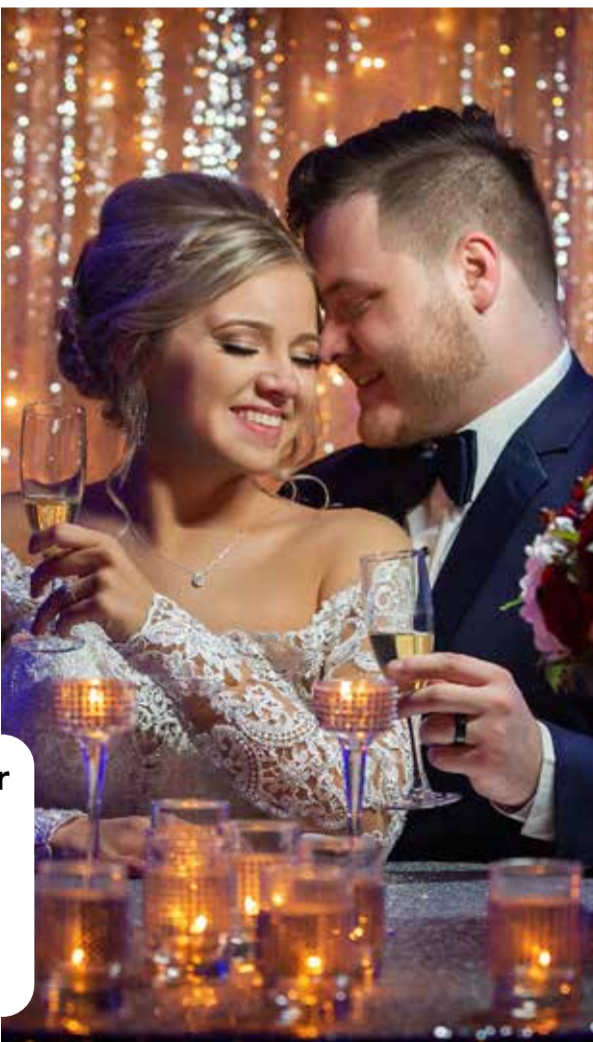
The groundbreaking signals the beginning of visible construction work on a project that has been in planning for several years.

COMMUNITY

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## COMMUNITY

# Funding delayed for Eric B. Mays Senior and Community Service Center

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — More than \$50,000 in Genesee County Senior Millage funding for the Eric B. Mays Senior and Community Service Center remains delayed after Flint City Council failed to approve a funding resolution during its May 11 meeting.

The resolution would have accepted \$54,744 from the Genesee County Department of Senior Services for programming and operations at the center. The measure failed in a 4-3 vote, with council members Leon El-Alamin, LaShawn Johnson, Judy Priestley and Candice Mushatt voting in support. Council members Jerri Winfrey-Carter, Tonya Burns and Jonathan Jarrett voted no. Council members Dennis Pfeiffer and Ladel Lewis

were absent.

A separate motion to keep the resolution at the council level for another vote at the next full meeting May 26 also failed 4-3, sending the measure back to committee for additional review before it can return for consideration.

The money was awarded after the Genesee County Board of Commissioners approved Senior Millage funding in 2024. The city's March 18 finance committee agenda listed the resolution as an amendment to the fiscal year 2026 budget, with the funding intended for senior center programming, operations and related allowable expenses.

The proposed spending plan included \$25,000 for professional services and \$20,344 for supplies, the largest portions of the funding. Additional amounts included \$3,000 for utilities,

\$2,500 for education, training and conferences, \$2,000 for community promotional materials, \$1,500 for copying services and \$400 for postage. The money was intended to cover operations from Jan. 1 through Sept. 30, 2026.

The failed vote followed several weeks of debate over financial transparency and the center's operating costs. Flint Beat reported that some council members raised questions about how the center is funded, including whether American Rescue Plan Act dollars were being used and whether expenses were being made without sufficient council oversight.

The city took over operations of the center in 2025 after a lease dispute and announced plans in January 2025 to rename the former Hasselbring Senior Center



ERIC MAYS (FILE PHOTO)

in honor of the late Councilman Eric Mays. The city described the center as both a senior hub and a broader community resource.

The center, located at 1002 W. Home Ave., provides programs, activities and services intended to promote health, safety and independence for seniors.

The delayed funding leaves the council to revisit the issue at the committee level before another possible vote.

## Saginaw to hold housing, economic development open house May 19

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Saginaw residents, business owners and community stakeholders will have an opportunity to weigh in on the city's housing and economic development priorities during an open house scheduled for May 19.

The Housing and Economic Development Strategy Open House will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Hoyt Library Main Auditorium, 505 Janes Ave. The event is being hosted by the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development.

The open house-style workshop will allow attendees to re-

view findings related to the city's Housing and Economic Development Strategy and offer feedback that may help shape future planning efforts. Participants may stop by at any time during the two-hour event.

Topics scheduled for discussion include housing preferences and community needs, local housing market demand, key industries and economic opportunities, economic trends affecting Saginaw and strategies to encourage new investment and growth.

The city's planning and economic development work includes housing inspections, building and code enforcement, planning and zoning, parking

enforcement, business development and support for redevelopment projects. The city also maintains resources for developers and residents, including a housing analysis, a development guide, a strategic economic development plan and a capital improvement plan for fiscal years 2026-31.

Housing and economic development planning has become a central issue for many Michigan communities as cities work to attract investment while addressing housing affordability, neighborhood stability and changing market demand. For Saginaw, the May 19 event offers residents a chance to participate directly in that planning process.

Public input gathered during the open house is expected to help identify local assets, community needs, growth goals and steps needed to support future development. The city has presented the strategy as a tool for supporting sustainable development, strengthening neighborhoods and promoting economic vitality throughout Saginaw.

The event is open to residents, business owners, community stakeholders and anyone interested in the city's future housing and economic development direction.

For more information, residents may contact Christina McEmber, city planner, at 989-759-1304.

## COMMUNITY

# Federal grants to support Midland water system, Sanford bridge recovery



SANFORD RAILROAD BRIDGE (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Two federal grants totaling more than \$1.5 million will support infrastructure resiliency in Midland and continued flood recovery work in Sanford, including improvements to the city's water backup system and design engineering for the Saginaw Road bridge reconstruction.

The Midland Business Alliance Advisory Committee on Infrastructure recently announced the grants, which were included in federal funding bills for fiscal year 2026. The funding includes \$600,000 for the City of Midland to install a permanent backup generator for drinking water infrastructure and \$955,000 for the Village of Sanford to support design engineering for the Saginaw

new Road bridge reconstruction project.

The Midland grant is an Environmental Protection Agency State and Tribal Assistance Grant. The city has a backup drinking water supply for its full water system in the event of a power outage at the main water treatment plant. The backup system includes 3.5 million gallons of below-ground water storage and a booster pumping station.

The Valley Drive pump station is designed to serve as a backup water service system during a citywide emergency or an event that would make the main high-service domestic pumping station inoperable. The permanent generator will replace the need to trailer a portable generator to the Valley Drive location, an area described as prone to extensive flooding. The \$600,000

federal grant, combined with about \$150,000 in local funding, is expected to allow Midland to install the generator in 2027.

The Sanford grant comes through the U.S. Department of Transportation Highway Infrastructure Programs and will support the design engineering phase of the Saginaw Road bridge reconstruction. The bridge is one mile west of the M-30 and Saginaw Road intersection and serves as a key east-west route connecting Midland, Sanford, Coleman and Clare, while also connecting one side of Sanford to the other.

The bridge was damaged during the 2020 dam failure after floodwaters overtopped it. At least 21 billion gallons of water from Wixom Lake, additional flow from Sanford Lake and debris struck the bridge area. The road approaching the bridge col-

lapsed, forcing emergency vehicles, commercial traffic, school buses, farm equipment and commuters to detour about five miles for months. Temporary emergency repairs were made in September 2020, but structural concerns later led to additional weight restrictions.

The \$955,000 federal grant will complement state funds secured by Sanford for the full bridge reconstruction project, which is estimated at about \$14 million. The Midland Business Alliance Advisory Committee on Infrastructure was formed in 2021 to focus on infrastructure issues affecting quality of life and economic vitality in mid-Michigan, with flooding and sanitary sewer issues among its first priorities.

## POLITICS

# Chedrick Greene's Senate win gives Democrats another overperformance in Michigan

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Democrat Chedrick Greene's decisive win in Michigan's 35th Senate District special election gave Democrats control of the state Senate for the rest of the year and delivered the party another strong performance in a politically divided district ahead of the 2026 midterms.

Greene, a Saginaw firefighter and Marine veteran, defeated Republican Jason Tunney, a former prosecutor and Saginaw-area attorney, and Libertarian Ali Sledz in the May 5 special election. The district includes parts of Bay, Midland and Saginaw counties, including Saginaw, Bay City and Midland.

Unofficial results showed Greene winning 58.87% of the vote across the three-county district, a much wider margin than Democrats posted there in the 2024 presidential election. Vice President Kamala Harris carried the district narrowly in 2024, winning 49.7% to President Donald Trump's 48.9%, according to Associated Press election analysis.

That gap turned Greene's victory into a notable overperformance for Democrats. A district Harris carried by less than 1 percentage point in 2024 gave Greene a roughly 19-point margin over Tunney less than two years later.

The win restores Democrats to a 20-18 majority in the Michigan Senate. Before the election, Democrats held a 19-18 edge because the seat had been vacant since January 2025, when Kristen McDonald Rivet left the Legislature after winning election to Congress. A Republican victory



CHEDRICK GREENE (FILE PHOTO)

would have tied the chamber 19-19, complicating the Democratic agenda during Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's final year in office.

The seat had been without representation for about 16 months. Whitmer called the special election in August 2025, with the primary held Feb. 3 and the general election held May 5. Greene will serve the remainder of McDonald Rivet's term, which ends Dec. 31. Both Greene and Tunney have filed to run again for the full term, with primaries scheduled for Aug. 4 and the general election set for November.

Greene's win drew statewide and national attention because of the district's competitive profile. Trump carried Bay, Midland and Saginaw counties in 2024, but the portions of those counties inside Senate District 35 are more evenly divided. McDonald Rivet

won the seat in 2022 with 53% of the vote.

The race also highlighted the Great Lakes Bay Region's role as a political testing ground. The district includes union households, Black voters in Saginaw, working-class communities and more conservative rural areas surrounding the region's urban centers. AP described the race as a potential indicator of voter sentiment before the midterm elections.

Greene declared victory before about 250 supporters at UA Local 85 in Saginaw. He told the crowd the campaign was "significantly outperforming our benchmarks," according to the Midland Daily News.

The election also became a major spending contest. Campaign finance filings showed Greene's campaign had raised

about \$404,302 as of April 19 and received more than \$618,000 in in-kind contributions, including significant support from the Michigan Senate Democratic Fund. Tunney's campaign had raised about \$398,161 and received \$58,000 in in-kind contributions.

Republicans pointed to Democratic spending and low special-election turnout as reasons not to overread the result. Michigan GOP Chairman Jim Runestad said after the election that special elections do not always predict November outcomes, while Tunney said the race was "only the halfway point" as he looks toward the full-term contest later this year.

Turnout was lower than in a regular general election but high for a special election. The 2022 Senate race in the district drew 116,351 votes, while the May 5 special election drew 62,124 votes, according to reporting based on unofficial results.

For Democrats, the result gives the party a governing advantage in the Senate while Republicans continue to control the Michigan House. The divided Legislature is expected to shape debates over the state budget, economic development, education, housing and public safety before voters return to the polls in November.

For the Great Lakes Bay Region, Greene's win means the 35th District has a state senator again after more than a year without representation in Lansing. The next test will come quickly, with the same seat back before voters this fall.

## POLITICS

# Flint City Council to consider 2026-27 budget at May 18 meeting



CITY OF FLINT MUNICIPAL CENTER (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — Flint City Council is expected to consider approval of the city's proposed fiscal year 2026-27 operating budget during a special meeting May 18, following weeks of budget hearings and department presentations.

The special meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Monday, May 18, in council chambers on the third floor of Flint City Hall. Council members are also expected to hold a community hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2026-27 budget and the forecasted fiscal year 2027-28 budget before considering final adoption.

Mayor Sheldon A. Neeley submitted the proposed budget

to the council March 2. Flint Beat reported that the council held six public hearings after the submission, giving members an opportunity to question department heads about spending, staffing and service priorities.

The proposed budget focuses on public safety, blight removal, water stabilization, infrastructure and core city services. The mayor's budget message states that general fund revenues are projected at \$73 million for the next fiscal year, with projected growth of 2% in later years. The proposal also states that tax rates would remain steady, with no increases in property tax or income tax rates.

The budget also includes six new general fund positions tied

to blight removal, according to the mayor's budget document. The administration described blight removal, public safety and water stabilization as key priorities for future investment.

Staffing has been a recurring issue during council budget discussions. Flint Fire Chief Theron Wiggins has outlined plans to increase fire department staffing, while Police Chief Terence Green has discussed efforts to expand community engagement, including a planned Citizen's Police Academy pilot program. The Parks and Recreation Department is also seeking two full-time positions, including an administrative analyst and a park safety facilities specialist.

The proposed budget is also

being reviewed as Flint continues managing long-term infrastructure needs, public safety costs and the transition from federal pandemic-era funding.

A copy of the proposed fiscal year 2026-27 budget and forecasted fiscal year 2027-28 budget is available through the city's website and at the City Clerk's Office. Residents needing disability accommodations for the hearing may contact the city clerk or email [CouncilPublicComment@cityofflint.com](mailto:CouncilPublicComment@cityofflint.com) with "Request for Accommodation" in the subject line.

The May 18 meeting will determine whether the budget advances as proposed or whether additional changes are requested before final adoption.

## POLITICS

# Saginaw proposes \$230.7 million budget with major water, sewer investments



SCREENSHOT OF SAGINAW, MI CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON APRIL 27, 2026. (CITY OF SAGINAW YOUTUBE)

## BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Saginaw City Council is reviewing a proposed \$230.7 million budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year that includes major investments in water and sewer infrastructure, continued public safety spending and a \$10 increase in the city's annual household rubbish fee.

The proposed budget totals \$230,651,742. It includes a \$46,178,972 general fund, \$53,956,230 in special revenue funds, \$119,355,822 in enterprise funds, \$11,125,808 in internal service funds and \$34,910 in fiduciary funds. Enterprise funds, which include water and sewer operations, make up more than half of the proposed city-wide budget.

The household rubbish fee would increase from \$240 to \$250 a year under the propos-

al. The city's Rubbish Collection Fund is budgeted at \$5,341,085 for fiscal year 2027, a decrease of \$72,650 from the current approved budget. The proposed budget states the fee increase is offset by a reduced use of fund equity.

The largest budget changes are tied to infrastructure.

Saginaw's Sewer Operations and Maintenance Fund is proposed at \$52,807,006, an increase of \$18,638,151, or 54.55%, from the previous fiscal year. The budget attributes the increase to bond proceeds from Michigan's Clean Water State Revolving Fund for wastewater system improvements and planned construction projects.

The Water Operations and Maintenance Fund is proposed at \$66,523,816, an increase of \$15,351,212, or 30%, from the prior fiscal year. The increase

is tied to Drinking Water State Revolving Fund bond proceeds, PFAS settlement payments and retained earnings for ongoing water supply system improvements. The proposed water budget also includes \$3,037,051 for lead and copper replacement and \$13.2 million for water bond construction.

WNEM reported that the proposed budget also includes investments connected to the wastewater treatment plant, water supply system, an elevated storage tank and lead and copper line replacements.

The budget also includes \$17,965,318 for police, \$10,084,443 for fire and \$3,899,141 in the Public Safety Fund. The Public Safety Fund increase is tied to rising property tax assessments and personnel costs for police and fire positions supported by the dedicated pub-

lic safety millage.

Other proposed spending includes \$4,558,453 for Community Development Block Grant-related funds, \$1,410,144 in remaining American Rescue Plan Act funds and \$20 million in the State of Michigan Saginaw Medical Facility Fund. The city received a \$30.3 million state appropriation in fiscal year 2024 for purchases and services to develop a medical facility in Saginaw.

Residents may comment on the proposed budget during a public hearing at 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 18, during the City Council meeting at the Anderson Enrichment Center.

The proposed budget places infrastructure at the center of Saginaw's financial plan for the coming year, with water, sewer and utility projects accounting for a major share of the city's spending priorities.

## HEALTH

# MyMichigan Health begins leadership transition as Bryan Cross steps in



BRYAN CROSS, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF MYMICHIGAN HEALTH (PHOTO CREDIT: MYMICHIGAN HEALTH)

## BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — MyMichigan Health has entered a new leadership period as Bryan Cross takes over as president and CEO of the Midland-based health system while outgoing CEO Lydia Watson prepares to retire July 5.

Cross became president and CEO on March 29, succeeding Watson, who has led MyMichigan Health since Dec. 1, 2022. The health system includes 12 medical centers across Michigan, including facilities in Alma, Alpena, Clare, Gladwin, Midland, Mount Pleasant, Saginaw, Sault

Ste. Marie, Standish, Tawas and West Branch.

The transition comes after a period of significant growth for the system, including the addition of former Ascension facilities in Saginaw, Standish and Tawas. The expansion increased MyMichigan's size by about 30% and strengthened the organization's presence in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

Cross began his career with MyMichigan as a paramedic supervisor before earning a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. He later became manager of pharmacy, spent 13 years as corporate direc-

tor of pharmacy, served as president of MyMichigan Medical Center Midland and became chief operating officer of MyMichigan Health in 2022.

In a May 5 interview with the Midland Daily News, Cross and Watson discussed the leadership transition, staffing shortages, patient access, artificial intelligence, system growth and lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 Midland-area flooding.

Access to care remains one of the health system's major challenges. Cross identified patient access, efficiency and technol-

ogy as priorities for the next several years as Michigan's aging population increases demand for medical services.

MyMichigan has also expanded its use of technology in clinical settings. The health system has introduced ambient listening tools in provider offices to help document conversations between patients and doctors, reducing time spent on typing notes and allowing providers to focus more directly on patients. Watson said providers using the technology are able to see an average of two additional patients per day.

The leadership transition also follows changes in MyMichigan's operating structure. The system has been moving toward a market president model intended to reduce duplication, improve efficiency and allow resources to be shared across facilities. Cross described the approach as operating as one hospital system with multiple campuses instead of separate hospitals functioning independently.

For Saginaw and the broader Great Lakes Bay Region, MyMichigan's growth remains especially significant. The former Ascension facilities in Saginaw, Standish and Tawas have been integrated into the health system, and MyMichigan has also been involved in broader regional health care planning tied to medical education and specialty care access.

Watson's final day is scheduled for July 5. Cross' first months as CEO are expected to focus on maintaining system stability while addressing staffing, access, technology and cost pressures facing hospitals across Michigan.

## HEALTH

# Community clinic opens at Jerome Green STEM Preschool in Saginaw



PHOTOS FROM THE MAY 13 OPEN HOUSE FOR THE NEW COMMUNITY CLINIC AT JEROME GREEN PRESCHOOL. (COURTESY OF SAGINAW ISD)

## BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Saginaw families now have another place to access health and family support services after Saginaw Intermediate School District and the Saginaw County Health Department opened a new community clinic inside Jerome Green STEM Preschool.

The clinic officially opened May 14 during an open house and facility tour at the preschool. The new space was created as part of recent renovations at Jerome Green STEM Preschool, where previously unused space was redesigned into a dedicated clinic area with its own separate and secure entrance.

“From the beginning, our vision for Jerome was always bigger than renovating a preschool building,” said Saginaw ISD Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Collier. “We wanted to create a community-centered space that

supports children and families in every possible way. By partnering with the Saginaw County Health Department to bring additional services directly into this facility, we are continuing to remove barriers, strengthen families, and expand possibilities for our community.”

The clinic is designed to connect families with services through the Saginaw County Health Department, including nutrition education, healthy food resources, breastfeeding support and referrals to additional community services. The clinic will help pregnant women, new mothers and mothers with young children connect with WIC services.

The new space is part of a broader effort to connect early childhood education with family support services in one location. Jerome Green STEM Preschool serves young learners through Early Head Start, Head Start and Great Start Readiness Program classrooms. The preschool also

became the first early childhood program in Michigan to implement a comprehensive, state-aligned Computer Science for All plan for preschool students earlier this year.

The Jerome Preschool renovation included structural im-

provements, a new parking lot, lighting upgrades, a modern HVAC system, a greenhouse, green walls, classroom hydroponics, a professional learning center, a medical clinic partnership and a community garden. Saginaw ISD acquired the former Jerome Elementary Campus from Saginaw Public Schools in 2021 and reopened the renovated preschool for the 2025-26 school year.

Saginaw ISD provides programs and services across Saginaw County, including early childhood education, special education, career and technical education, instructional services, transportation and technology support. The district serves 12 local school districts, four public school academies and 22 non-public schools, with a total enrollment of about 26,000 students.

By placing health and family resources inside a preschool setting, the clinic gives families access to support services in a familiar location where children are already learning and receiving care.



JEROME GREEN PRESCHOOL. (COURTESY OF SAGINAW ISD)

## HEALTH

# Michigan lawmakers propose new transportation system for mental health crises



GENERATED PHOTO DEPICTING A CRISIS RESPONSE VEHICLE (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan lawmakers have introduced bipartisan legislation that would create a dedicated transportation system for people experiencing mental or behavioral health crises, aiming to reduce the use of ambulances and law enforcement vehicles for nonmedical emergency transport.

The proposal was discussed May 13 at the Michigan Capitol and reported May 15 by Michigan Advance. The package includes Senate Bills 927 and 928, sponsored by state Sen. Mark Huizenga, R-Walker, and House Bills 5943 and 5944, sponsored by state Reps. Steve Frisbie, R-Battle Creek, and Amos O'Neal, D-Saginaw. State Sen. Sylvia Santana, D-Detroit, is also supporting the Senate bills.

The legislation would make behavioral health transportation a Medicaid-covered service in Michigan. The bills would cover emergency transportation for people experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis, including interfacility transfers, psychiatric admissions and mental health evaluations.

Michigan currently does not have a specified emergency medical transportation system for people experiencing an acute mental health crisis. In many cases, residents must wait for an ambulance or be transported by law enforcement.

The bills would establish standards for who qualifies for behavioral health transportation, how providers must operate and what safety measures must be followed. Proposed requirements include vehicle safety standards and staff training

in mental health first aid, CPR, trauma-informed care, de-escalation techniques and other patient protections.

Frisbie, who worked as a paramedic for more than 40 years, has framed the proposal as both a patient care issue and a cost issue. The plan is intended to free up ambulances for medical emergencies while creating a more appropriate response for people in behavioral health crises.

The Michigan Association of Ambulance Services is among the stakeholders supporting the bills. Hospitals and ambulance services often absorb costs connected to mental health transportation when there is no dedicated reimbursement structure.

The legislation also has a direct connection to Mid-Michigan through O'Neal, a Saginaw Democrat and co-sponsor of House Bill 5944. That bill was intro-

duced May 12 and referred to the House Health Policy Committee. LegiScan lists the measure as a bill to provide coverage for behavioral health transportation by adding a section to Michigan's Social Welfare Act.

Huizenga's Senate Bills 927 and 928 have been referred to the Senate Health Policy Committee, while House Bills 5943 and 5944 have been referred to the House Health Policy Committee.

The proposal comes as communities across Michigan continue facing demand for emergency mental health services, limited inpatient behavioral health capacity and pressure on emergency departments. Supporters of the legislation are seeking a system that better matches mental health response with patient need while reducing strain on ambulances, hospitals and police.

## HEALTH

# Michigan schools can apply for wellness program aimed at student health

BY MB STAFF

MICHIGAN — Michigan schools have until June 1 to apply for a statewide wellness program designed to improve student health, prevent chronic disease and strengthen mental health support in school communities.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and its Building Healthy Communities partners are accepting applications for the 2026-27 Building Healthy Communities: Step Up for School Wellness program, a schoolwide initiative focused on physical activity, nutrition, mental health and overall well-being for students and staff.

The program is open to any

Michigan public, charter or private nonprofit school serving grades K-12. Eligibility is not based on geographic location, free and reduced-price meal percentages or participation in other school wellness grants, programs or initiatives.

Building Healthy Communities was founded in 2009 and has reached more than 615,000 students in more than 1,400 Michigan schools, according to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. The program provides schools with tools and resources to assess wellness needs, create action plans and make changes that support healthier learning environments.

The Step Up for School Well-

ness program focuses on creating a culture of wellness that supports healthier food choices, more physical activity, mental health, trauma-informed support and overall well-being. The program also encourages schools to make policy, system and environmental changes that support both students and staff.

For the 2026-27 school year, the program includes a new Smart Swaps resource designed to help school food service programs meet updated nutrition standards. The resource includes culinary training, recipes, menu templates and training tools focused on lowering added sugar and increasing protein in student-approved meals.

Blue Cross reports that Building Healthy Communities has produced measurable results, including significant reductions in obesity, a 19-minute daily reduction in screen time and an increase in physical activity. The organization also reports that participating students take about 700 more steps per day, spend 35 more minutes per week in moderate to vigorous physical activity and consume 40% more fruits and vegetables than the national average.

Schools can review eligibility information at [www.bcbsm.com/buildhealth](http://www.bcbsm.com/buildhealth) and apply at <https://buildinghealthycommunities.arewehealthy.com>. Applications are due June 1.



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## HEALTH

# Michigan marks Women's Health Week, Period Poverty Awareness Week

BY MB STAFF

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan is marking Women's Health Week and Period Poverty Awareness Week from May 11-17, placing attention on preventive care, mental health, maternal health and access to menstrual products for women, girls and menstruating people across the state.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II proclaimed May 11-17 as Women's Health Week in Michigan. The proclamation highlights the continuing impact of physical and mental health conditions on women and girls and encourages health care professionals, community organizations and residents to support efforts that improve health and well-being.

The state observance comes during National Women's Health Week, led each May by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health. This year's national observance was May 10-16, with the theme "Prevention, Innovation, and Impact: A New Era in Women's Health." The campaign encourages women of all ages to prioritize physical, mental and emotional health, with attention to prevention, early detection and care across the lifespan.

Michigan also proclaimed May 11-17 as Period Poverty Awareness Week, recognizing lack of access to menstrual products as a public health and economic issue. The proclamation cites national surveys and research showing two in five women and girls struggle to secure enough period supplies each month because of lack of income.

Period poverty can affect school attendance, work participation and physical health. Michigan's proclamation notes



WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK (FILE PHOTO)

that people without adequate period supplies may miss educational opportunities or lose pay, and some may use substitute products such as socks or toilet paper or go too long without changing products, increasing health risks.

The issue is especially important for low-income families, students, people experiencing homelessness and residents already facing barriers to health care, transportation and basic household needs. Menstrual products are not covered by most public benefit programs, making access dependent on personal income, school availability, non-profit distribution programs or emergency assistance.

Michigan has taken some steps in recent years to reduce the cost burden. Public Acts 108 and 109 of 2021 exempted feminine hygiene products from Michigan sales and use taxes be-

ginning Feb. 3, 2022. The exemption applies to tampons, panty liners, menstrual cups, sanitary napkins and similar products designed for menstrual hygiene.

The Michigan Department of Education also lists the Accessible Period Products Project, known as Section 99g, as a grant program connected to period product access in schools. The program is tied to state legislation and includes grant awardees posted by the department.

Women's Health Week also connects to broader health concerns, including maternal health, chronic disease, cancer screenings, heart health, menopause, nutrition and mental health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 649 maternal deaths in the United States in 2024, with a maternal mortality rate of 17.9 deaths per 100,000 live births. The rate for Black non-Hispanic women was 44.8

deaths per 100,000 live births, significantly higher than rates for white, Hispanic and Asian women.

State health resources include the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' maternal and infant health programs, Michigan 2-1-1 and the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline. Michigan 2-1-1 connects residents with local help for food, housing, bills and other needs, while the maternal mental health hotline provides free, confidential support before, during and after pregnancy in English and Spanish.

The two observances highlight a shared message: access to health care, basic hygiene products and reliable information affects whether women, girls and families can fully participate in school, work and community life.

## EDUCATION

# Mott Foundation commits up to \$100 million for new Flint high school

BY MB STAFF

FLINT, Mich. — A long-discussed new high school for Flint Community Schools moved closer to reality after the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation announced a commitment of up to \$100 million to support construction at the former Flint Central High School site.

The foundation announced the commitment May 11, describing it as part of a broader effort to strengthen education in Flint during the foundation's 100th anniversary year. The funding is intended to help build a new high school on the former Flint Central campus, a historic site in the city's College Cultural District.

The commitment includes more than \$6 million already awarded for design work, demolition and site preparation. The project also builds on \$35.9 million awarded by the state of Michigan in 2025.

Flint Community Schools and the Mott Foundation have been working with community members, district leadership and the Flint Board of Education on plans for the new high school. The project is expected to include



RENDERINGS OF THE FUTURE FLINT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL (PHOTO CREDIT: FLINT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS)

updated learning spaces, modern technology, career pathways and college-preparation opportunities for students.

Abatement work at the former Flint Central High School site is expected to begin later this month. Demolition is scheduled for later in 2026, followed by construction. The goal is for the new high school to open in time for the 2028-29 school year.

The project represents one of the largest education investments in Flint in decades. WNEM reported the building



AERIAL VIEW RENDERINGS OF THE FUTURE FLINT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL (PHOTO CREDIT: FLINT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS)

would be the district's first entirely new school facility in more than 50 years.

The former Flint Central High School has long carried historic and emotional significance in the city. The planned project would return the site to active educational use while replacing aging and deteriorated facilities with a new building designed for current instructional needs.

For Flint families, the project could become a major turning point for the district, which has faced enrollment losses, aging buildings and financial challeng-

es. The commitment gives the district a clearer path toward a modern high school while keeping the project connected to a well-known Flint landmark.

The school is expected to serve as more than a classroom building. Project plans and public statements have emphasized student opportunity, career preparation and a renewed sense of pride in Flint Community Schools.

The next phase will focus on site preparation, demolition and continued planning before construction begins.



RENDERINGS OF THE FUTURE FLINT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL (PHOTO CREDIT: FLINT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS)

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## EDUCATION

# What to look for in a Superior Graduation Speech



BY CRAIG DOUGLAS

It is an exciting time of the year, with Commencement services being held in schools all across the Great Lakes Bay Area. Have you ever considered what goes into an exceptional Commencement address?

In my career I have delivered four of them, and I can tell you each one was full of anxiety for me because I wanted to do a “great job” for students, parents, faculty, and board members. Here are some ideas anyone should consider, including all who are in the audience listening to them.

According to a brief review on the Internet, there is consensus on the following elements for an exceptionally strong commencement speech: Being real, Being clear, and Being inspiring.

**Being Real** — Speak honestly. Share true stories from your life. When you sound like yourself, people listen. A personal story or reflection is especially compelling.

**Being Clear** — Use simple words and talk about things the audience cares about. Make your message easy to follow. Make the speech concise and definitely NOT too long. A good rule of thumb is to shoot for 8 – 12 minutes in length.

**Being Inspiring** — Give the audience hope. Encourage them to try new things, work hard, and believe in themselves. Be positive and encouraging and hopeful.

There are some great speeches already posted on the Internet from this spring. One in particular features the Country singer, Eric Church. I urge you to check it out.

Best wishes to all who are attending and participating in 2026 Commencement ceremonies this Spring.



## 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](http://www.saginawpromise.org) or email [dsanchez@saginawpromise.org](mailto:dsanchez@saginawpromise.org) or telephone (989) 607-3428.

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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.*

## EDUCATION

# Saginaw Township school bond rejected for third time in three years



SAGINAW TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY SCHOOLS (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Voters rejected a \$94.2 million Saginaw Township Community Schools bond proposal May 5, marking the third time in three years the district has failed to win approval for a major facilities funding request.

The proposal would have funded improvements across all eight district buildings, including safety, security, critical infrastructure and learning space upgrades. Unofficial results showed 58% of voters opposed the request, according to WNEM.

The district serves nearly 4,800 students in elementary, middle and high schools within Saginaw Township.

The May proposal was smaller than two previous bond requests rejected by voters. A nearly \$243 million proposal failed in 2023, and a \$169.2 million proposal failed in November 2025. The latest proposal was presented as a scaled-back plan focused on essential needs rather than new buildings or athletic projects.

The district stated before the election that the bond would have created a 1-mill tax increase. For a homeowner with a home valued at \$120,000 and a taxable value of \$60,000, the cost would have been about \$60 per year, or about \$5 per month.

Planned projects included safer school entrances, updated classrooms and repairs to aging systems such as roofs and heat-

ing. District leaders also identified open-concept classroom layouts as a safety concern because some spaces cannot be closed or secured in emergencies.

After the vote, Superintendent Jamie Kraatz said the district's facility needs remain and that the district would take time to listen and determine its next steps. The statement was published by the district May 6.

The repeated bond defeats highlight the challenge many Michigan school districts face when asking voters to approve tax increases for building repairs, safety upgrades and long-term facility needs. The Saginaw Township proposal came during a period of continued concern over household costs, property taxes and the affordability of

school construction plans.

WNEM reported a spokesperson for a local "Vote No" group cited economic pressure, fixed incomes and concerns about district spending as reasons some residents opposed the proposal.

The school board has not announced whether or when another bond request could appear before voters. Any future proposal would likely require additional public engagement, a revised facilities plan or a different funding approach.

For now, the district must determine how to address building repairs and safety improvements without the \$94.2 million bond package.

## EDUCATION

# Midland Public Schools weighs bond options for facility upgrades



MIDLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATION CENTER (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

MIDLAND, Mich. — Midland Public Schools is weighing several possible bond and sinking fund options as the district continues planning for long-term facility upgrades after voters rejected a \$285 million bond proposal last year.

The district held a community engagement session May 7 at Northeast Middle School, where about 35 attendees reviewed possible funding options and ranked facility priorities. It was part of the district's final round of community engagement sessions focused on school buildings and future ballot possibilities.

Attendees were asked to consider six possible options for a November 2026 ballot proposal. The options included a 1-mill, \$98 million bond; a 1.5-mill,

\$135 million bond; a 2-mill, \$165 million bond; a 2.5-mill, \$200 million bond; a 3.6-mill, \$278 million bond; or a sinking fund without a bond. Each bond option also included the possibility of a \$1 million to \$3 million sinking fund.

The estimated costs were based on an average home value of \$247,000. The bond options would run for 20 to 25 years.

A previous \$285 million Midland Public Schools bond proposal was rejected in May 2025, with 67.96% of voters opposing it.

The district's facilities planning work is being led by a team that includes GMB, Clark Construction and Three Rivers Corporation. A facilities assessment completed by GMB in November and December 2025 found that the district's 17 facilities would

need an estimated \$549,432,151 in investment over the next 10 years to maintain current buildings.

Residents at the May 7 session ranked priorities including infrastructure replacement, parking and drop-off improvements, elementary building use, art and music upgrades, classroom furniture and fixtures, buses, career and technical education improvements, athletics, instructional technology and playground improvements.

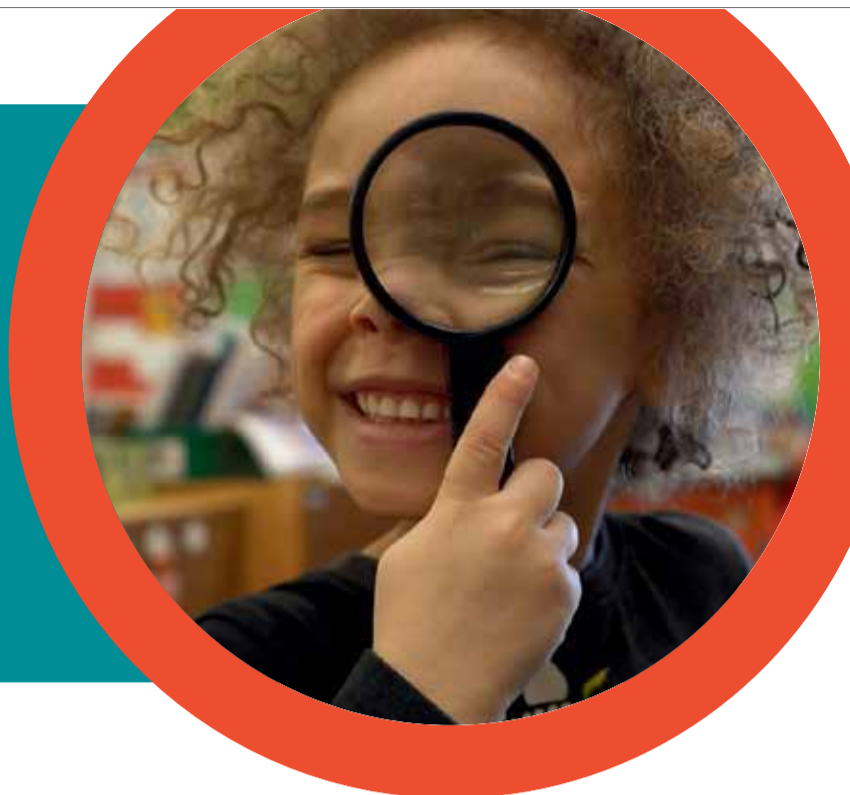
One concept discussed during the session involved creating one unified high school for grades 10-12 at the current Midland High School building, with a new adjacent building for ninth grade and a career and technical education center. Under that concept, the current Dow High School building would be-

come a grades 7-8 school, Jefferson Middle School would become a grades 5-6 school and the district's six elementary schools would serve kindergarten through fourth grade.

The district has not selected a final proposal. More discussion is scheduled for the Midland Public Schools Board of Education meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, May 18, at the MPS Administration Center, 600 E. Carpenter St. The board agenda includes a facility planning update and workshop presented by Steven Gunther of GMB.

The district's next decision will be whether to pursue another bond proposal, a sinking fund or a combination of both. Any plan would have to balance building needs, student programming, community priorities and voter concerns about cost.

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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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## BUSINESS + FINANCE

# Bay City foundry expansion to bring 25 jobs, \$2.2 million investment to Bay County



GENERATED IMAGE DEPICTING MOLTEN METAL POUR IN INDUSTRIAL FOUNDRY (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

BAY CITY, Mich. — A Bay City foundry plans to expand its operations, bringing 25 new jobs and \$2.2 million in capital investment to Bay County as demand grows for American-made manufacturing.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced the expansion May 6 for Acra Cast Inc., a veteran-owned casting foundry that produces metal components for more than 15 industries, including defense, automotive, machine tool, material handling, high-temperature pintle chain, pumps and valves. The company was established in 1966 and has 128 active customers nationwide.

The expansion is expected to allow Acra Cast to bring more production work in-house instead of subcontracting, expand its customer base, increase its physical footprint, purchase new equipment and hire additional employees. The company's investment comes as manufacturers continue working to strengthen domestic supply chains and reduce reliance on outside production.

The Michigan Strategic Fund is supporting the project with a \$100,000 Michigan Business Development Program performance-based grant. State officials said the grant is tied to job creation and investment commitments that must be formalized through a performance-based

agreement.

Acra Cast President Richard Singer said the company's annual sales have increased by 500% over the past seven years as demand has grown for American-made manufacturing.

"The current round of improvements, totaling about \$2 million dollars, will position us for even more growth," Singer said in the state announcement.

The project also includes transportation infrastructure improvements on First Street in Bay City. The Michigan Department of Transportation is supporting the expansion with a \$752,428 Transportation Economic Development Fund Category A share to reconstruct First Street from North Johnson Street to North

Trumbull Street. The work will include widened travel lanes, curb and gutter installation, a strengthened subbase and new storm sewer infrastructure.

The road improvements are intended to bring the corridor to all-season standards, allowing Acra Cast to move products in and out of its facility more efficiently. The street serves as the primary route into and out of the foundry, making the infrastructure work directly connected to the company's growth plans.

Bay City is also moving toward final approval of a real property tax abatement for the project. The Michigan Economic Development Corp. authorized a State Education Tax abatement to be used with the locally approved abatement, and Delta College provided a workforce support proposal valued at an estimated \$229,307.

Acra Cast works with more than 120 local Bay County businesses, along with other suppliers throughout the United States and Canada. The expansion adds to recent manufacturing and infrastructure investments across the Great Lakes Bay Region, where local economic development efforts continue to focus on job growth, industrial retention and workforce training.

The project's next steps include finalizing performance-based agreements, completing local approval processes and advancing the First Street reconstruction work connected to the expansion.

## BUSINESS + FINANCE

# Team One, CASE Credit Union plan merger to create \$1.1 billion Michigan institution



TEAM ONE CREDIT UNION, CASE CREDIT UNION PLAN MERGER IN MICHIGAN. (PHOTO CREDIT: TEAM ONE CREDIT UNION)

## BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Team One Credit Union and CASE Credit Union are planning to merge, bringing together two Michigan-based financial institutions with roots in education, community banking and more than 90 years of service.

The merger is expected to take effect in January 2027, pending regulatory and membership approval. The combined credit union would serve more than 76,000 members and manage more than \$1.1 billion in assets.

Team One, based in Saginaw, announced the planned

partnership with Lansing-based CASE Credit Union in early May. Both institutions are presenting the merger as a long-term strategy to expand services, invest in technology and strengthen operations while continuing member-focused banking.

There are no immediate changes planned for member accounts, debit or credit cards, digital banking services or branch access. Members do not need to take any action at this time, and accounts remain federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration.

The merger will be completed in phases, with both credit unions continuing normal op-

erations through 2026 and during the transition period. No immediate name change has been announced.

Team One was founded in 1935 by educators in Saginaw and has grown into a regional credit union serving members across Michigan and parts of Florida. Its Michigan locations include Bad Axe, Bay City, Caro, Flint, Owosso, Saginaw, Saginaw Township, Sandusky, Thomas Township and Traverse City, along with a Bonita Springs, Florida, sales office.

CASE Credit Union was chartered Feb. 19, 1936, to serve Lansing-area teachers and administrators as Lansing Teach-

ers Credit Union. The institution now serves about 30,000 members, operates five branches in the Greater Lansing area and controls more than \$400 million in assets.

Team One reported about \$751.8 million in assets and 47,504 members as of Sept. 30, 2025, according to credit union financial data.

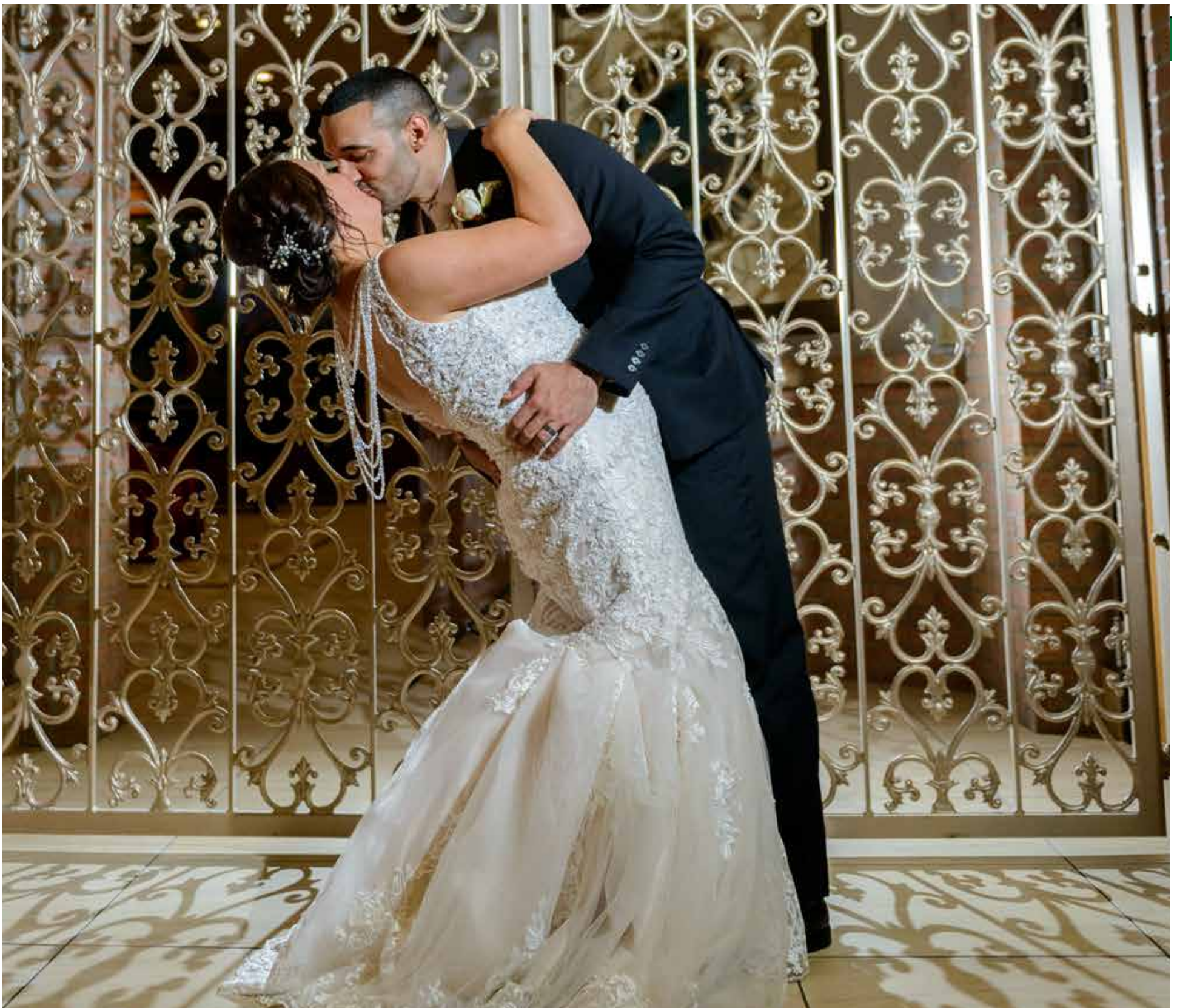
Leadership roles for the combined organization have also been announced. Jeff Benson, president and CEO of CASE Credit Union, is expected to serve as chief executive officer. Derrick Barber, CEO of Team One Credit Union, is expected to serve as president.

“This partnership is about building something stronger for the future,” Barber said in the merger announcement. “From the beginning, it was clear how aligned our organizations are, not just in our legacies, but in our values and how we serve our members and communities.”

Benson said the merger would help the institutions respond to changing member needs by improving capabilities and expanding investments in technology and innovation.

The planned merger reflects a broader trend in the credit union industry as financial institutions seek greater scale to manage technology costs, cybersecurity needs, regulatory requirements and member demand for digital services. For Saginaw and the Great Lakes Bay Region, the deal would keep Team One tied to its local legacy while connecting the institution to a larger statewide network.

The merger remains subject to required approvals before it can be finalized.



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## SPORTS

# Saginaw United alum Michael Baldwin places fourth at U20 U.S. Open Championships

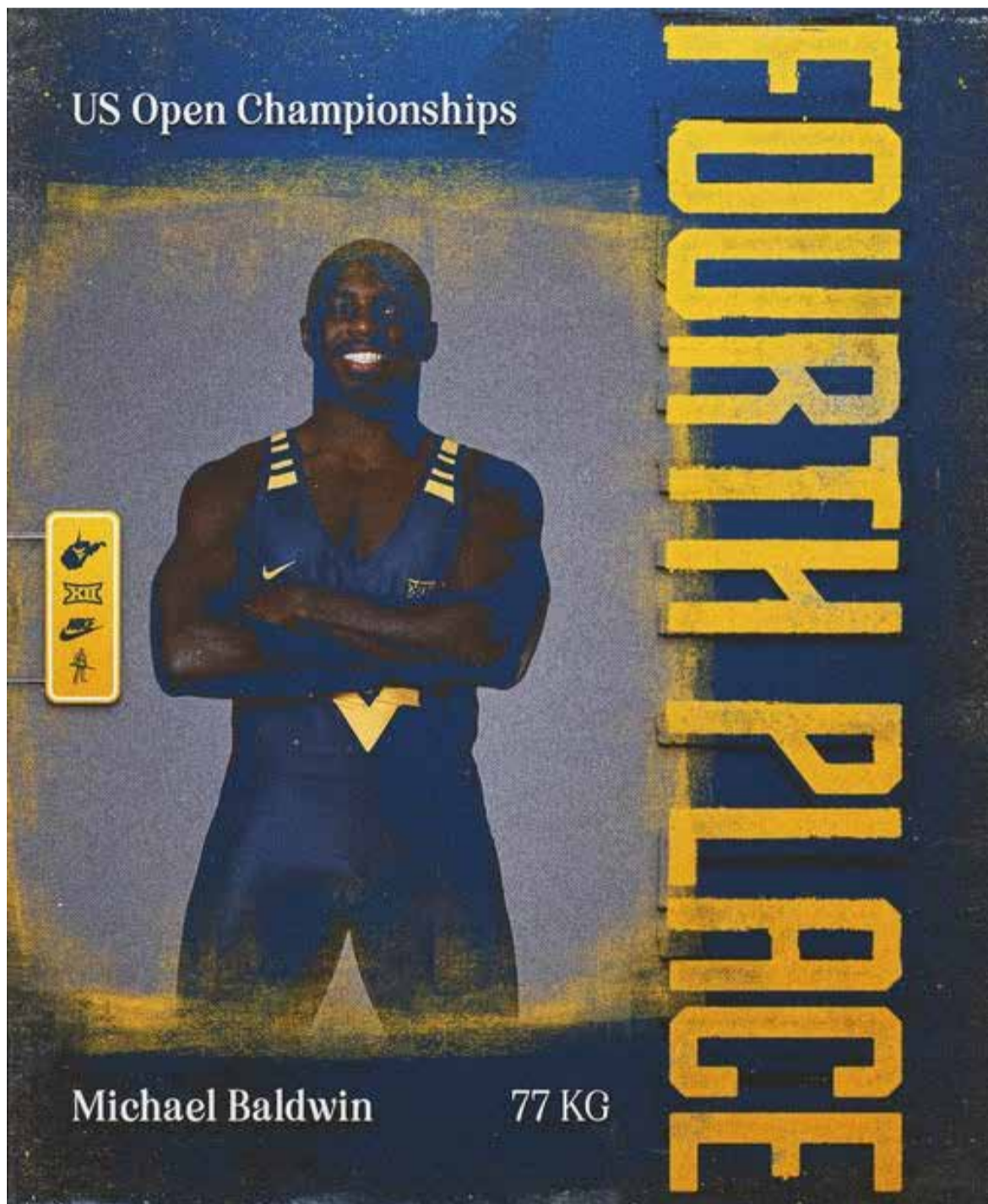
BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Saginaw United High School alumnus Michael Baldwin continues to build his wrestling résumé at the college and national levels, earning a fourth-place finish in Greco-Roman wrestling at the U20 U.S. Open Championships in Las Vegas.

Baldwin, a 2025 graduate of Saginaw United and a freshman member of the West Virginia University wrestling team, competed at 77 kilograms during the national tournament. USA Wrestling results listed Baldwin as competing for WVRTC, where he became the only wrestler from his team to place in the competition.

The U20 U.S. Open Championships bring together top young wrestlers from across the country and serve as a major national stage for athletes competing in Olympic-style wrestling. The Greco-Roman style emphasizes upper-body control, throws and positioning, with wrestlers unable to attack an opponent's legs.

Baldwin opened the tournament with a 7-2 decision over Cael Miller of Knights RTC in the round of 32 before falling to eventual champion Leister Bowling IV



MICHAEL BALDWIN (PHOTO CREDIT: WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY)

of Hawkeye Wrestling Club in the round of 16. He then battled back through the consolation bracket with several wins, including technical fall victories over Jacob Bacon of Sons of Thunder, Jacob Marshall of Panguitch and Micah Roper of Viking Wrestling Club.

His run continued with a 6-5 decision over Brodie Bedford of

Spartan Mat Club and a 9-7 decision over Logan Glynn of The Best Wrestler in the consolation semifinals. Baldwin advanced to the third-place match before falling by technical fall to Cael Gilmore of Beast Mode Wrestling, securing a fourth-place finish at 77 kilograms.

The national placement adds

another accomplishment to Baldwin's first year at West Virginia. WVU Athletics lists Baldwin as a freshman from Saginaw who wrestled at Saginaw United High School before joining the Mountaineers. His WVU profile shows he finished his freshman season 18-9 overall, including a 9-4 record while competing unattached.

Baldwin also earned recognition earlier this year from West Virginia University Athletics. In January, he was named WVU Student-Athlete of the Week after earning his first career win over a ranked opponent in his first dual appearance, defeating Wyoming's No. 28 Riley Davis by decision, 3-2.

Before college, Baldwin competed at Saginaw United under head coach Angel Rodriguez and wrestled for Ragnarok Wrestling Club. His WVU profile lists 120 career high school wins, a 2025 MHSAA state championship, two regional runner-up finishes, two district championships and a third-place finish at the 2024 MHSAA state championships.

Baldwin's performance in Las Vegas highlights the continued presence of Saginaw athletes on national stages and gives Saginaw United another alumni achievement to celebrate.



# 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

# Midland High junior L.J. Gallihugh breaks 35-year-old SVL sprint record



MIDLAND HIGH'S L.J. GALLIHUGH (PHOTO CREDIT: PREPREDZONE.COM)

## BY MB STAFF

GRAND BLANC, Mich. — Midland High junior L.J. Gallihugh broke a 35-year-old Saginaw Valley League record Friday, winning the boys' 100-meter dash at the SVL Championships with a school-record and personal-best time of 10.54 seconds.

Gallihugh's performance topped the previous league record of 10.64 seconds, set by Saginaw Arthur Hill's Brian Pruitt. Pruitt later became a First Team All-America running back at

Central Michigan University.

The record-breaking race marked another major step in Gallihugh's standout season. It was the third time

he has broken his own Midland High school record in the 100-meter dash, continuing a steady climb among the region's top sprinters.

Gallihugh also finished sec-



BRIAN PRUITT  
(PHOTO CREDIT:  
SAGINAW COUNTY  
SPORTS HALL OF FAME)

ond in the 200-meter dash with a personal-best time of 21.67 seconds, breaking his own school record in that event as well. His results gave Midland one of the top individual performances of the SVL championship meet.

The 100-meter record was especially notable because of how long it had stood. A record lasting more than three decades in one of Michigan's competitive high school conferences represents a rare achievement, particularly in a sprint event where hundredths of a second separate

top finishers.

Gallihugh's win also helped Midland's boys team finish second overall at the meet with 126 points, behind Saginaw Heritage, which won the team title with 139 points.

For Midland High, Gallihugh's performance adds another chapter to the school's track and field history. For the Saginaw Valley League, it marks the end of one long-standing sprint record and the beginning of a new standard in the boys' 100-meter dash.



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# 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

## The Pressure Didn't Crush You – It Refined You

*"Suffering produces perseverance;  
perseverance, character, and  
character, hope"*

*Romans 5:3-4 NIV*



BY MINISTER CAROLYN  
CARTER TOWNSEL

There are seasons in life that feel **unbearable**.  
The pressure is **heavy**.  
The tears are **private**.  
The disappointment is **deep**.

And the weight of what you've survived makes  
you wonder if you'll ever feel whole again.

But what if the pressure was never sent to de-  
stroy you? What if it was refining you? Gold is  
not refined in comfort. Diamonds are not formed  
without pressure. And strong Believers are not  
created in easy seasons.

The very fire you prayed would pass became  
the place where God strengthened your faith,  
sharpened your discernment, and revealed the  
power you didn't know you carried. Pressure has  
a way of exposing what's fragile, but it also re-  
veals what's real. It teaches you how to endure.  
How to trust God when answers are delayed.  
How to stand when life feels uncertain.

You may have cried.  
You may have bent under the weight.  
**But you did not break.**

Instead, you became wiser. More intention-  
al. More prayerful. More powerful. The pressure  
didn't crush you, it refined your character, your  
voice, your resilience, and your purpose. And  
now you as the Believer emerging from the sea-  
son is not the same Believer who entered it.

**You are stronger.**  
**You are clearer.**

You're refined by fire and covered by grace.  
Therefore, we can be grateful for the process.  
There is purpose in the pressure. And what God  
is producing in you will be worth every battle you  
survived.

Beloved, the fire was never meant to consume  
you, it was meant to reveal the gold in you.

Blessings to All,  
Carolyn

## FAITH IN FOCUS

# Faith reminds us that a heavy heart is still held by God



GROUP GATHERING (FILE PHOTO)

BY MB STAFF

SAGINAW, Mich. — Some seasons of life feel like sunshine. Others feel like trying to pray through fog.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to speak with compassion about anxiety, depression, grief, trauma, stress and emotional exhaustion. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration recognizes the month each May to increase awareness about mental health and connect people with support.

For people of faith, this month is also a reminder that God is not afraid of our tears.

The Bible is filled with people who loved God and still struggled. David cried out from the depths of despair. Elijah became so weary he wanted to give up. Job sat in grief. Jeremiah wept. Even Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane, was “exceeding sorrowful,” showing us that pain is not proof of weak faith.

Psalm 34:18 says, “The Lord

*is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart.”* That means God does not step away when life becomes heavy. He comes closer.

Mental health struggles do not make a person less spiritual. They make a person human. A racing mind, a tired body, a grieving heart or a silent battle with depression does not separate anyone from the love of God.

Romans 8:38-39 reminds believers that neither death, life, angels, powers, things present nor things to come “*shall be able to separate us from the love of God.*”

**That includes hard days.  
That includes panic attacks.  
That includes nights when sleep will not come.**

That includes moments when all a person can pray is, “Lord, help me.”

Faith can be a lifeline, but faith does not require silence. Prayer is powerful. So is counseling. Worship can bring peace. So can rest, medication, support groups, therapy and honest con-

versations with trusted people. God can work through Scripture, and he can also work through doctors, therapists, pastors, friends and family members who help carry what feels too heavy to hold alone.

Philippians 4:6-7 encourages believers to bring everything to God in prayer. The promise is peace — not always instant answers, not always a quick fix, but peace that can guard the heart and mind.

That kind of peace may arrive softly.

It may come through a Sunday sermon that feels written just for you. It may come through a friend who checks in at the right moment. It may come through the courage to make an appointment, ask for help or finally say, “I am not OK.”

Mental Health Awareness Month invites churches, families and communities to become safer places for truth. People should not have to pretend to be whole in order to be loved. The church should be a place where someone can praise God and still

admit they are tired.

Galatians 6:2 says, “*Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*”

**That is ministry.**

**That is love.**

**That is community.**

A text message can be ministry. A meal can be ministry. A ride to an appointment can be ministry. Sitting beside someone without trying to fix everything can be ministry. Sometimes the most spiritual thing a person can say is, “I am here, and you do not have to go through this alone.”

For teens, parents, caregivers, seniors and anyone quietly carrying stress, remember this: Your worth is not measured by how strong you appear. God sees the parts of you that others miss. He knows the prayers you never said out loud. He understands the tears you wiped away before anyone noticed.

Isaiah 41:10 says, “*Fear thou not; for I am with thee.*”

That is not just a verse for perfect days. It is a promise for hospital rooms, empty bedrooms, counseling sessions, difficult mornings and long nights.

For anyone in immediate danger, call 911. Anyone experiencing a mental health, suicide or substance use crisis can call or text 988 for free, confidential support through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, which is available 24 hours a day.

This month, choose gentleness. Check on someone. Rest without guilt. Pray honestly. Ask for help when needed.

**And when your heart feels heavy, remember: A heavy heart is still held by God.**

# CHURCH DIRECTORY



### Faith Ministries Church

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



### Ministry Without Walls

Pastor, John Dunn  
3783 Mannion Road  
Saginaw, MI 48603



### New Life Baptist Ministries

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



### Glory House Ministries

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



### World Outreach Campus

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



### New Mt. Calvary Baptist Church

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



### Holy Communion Gospel Center

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



### New Beginnings Ministries

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



### Saint Paul Baptist Church

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



### Jacob's Ladder

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



### New Birth Missionary Baptist

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3121 Sheridan  
Saginaw, Michigan  
989-327-1755



### Victorious Belivers Ministries Church

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



### Bridgeport Community Church

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



### New Covenant Christian Center

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



### Anointed Temple Ministries

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



### Bethel AME Church

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



### Zion Missionary Baptist Church

Pastor Rodrick A. Smith  
721 Johnson Ave  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
989-754-9621  
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## FUNDRAISING GOOD TIMES

## Life without nonprofits

BY MEL AND PEARL SHAW

*We have had hard times before, and we are having them again. Will it get better? We believe it will. But in the meantime, it's time to help each other. And it's time to support the value and dignity that nonprofit organizations and institutions provide each and every day. These nonprofits are us – the best of us.*

Gas prices are up. Groceries cost more. Wages are frozen. Some government employees are not being paid. Major employers are “restructuring,” laying people off at an alarming rate. Funding from government agencies is changing and too often disappearing from our communities. Too many of our neighbors are hiding in their own homes for fear of being swept off the street and deported. Jewish institutions are targeted for hate and violence. What is going on? And who can help?

One answer: nonprofits, big and small. They have always sought to fill the void, and they continue to do so. They may not be visible, but they are everywhere. They are feeding and providing meals to the working poor, those who have lost their jobs, and those who are not currently receiving wages while working. They operate clinics that provide health care and mental health services to those who can no longer afford health insurance. They



FILE PHOTO

are offering spiritual assistance as people turn to faith organizations for emotional, mental, and spiritual support and health care. They help the growing number of people experiencing intimate partner violence. They are our nonprofits, and they are serving us.

Nonprofits are organizing and informing us about what we can do within our democracy to stop the cruel exertion of power against “the people” instead of the considered use of power “for the people.” They are rescuing animals that people can no longer afford to care for. They are opening their arms to homeless and exploited children and teenagers, and not turning away those who are LGBTQ. They are innovating education, helping to ensure all of us have access to an education and the skills to earn a

livable wage. They are teaching English to those who are new to our country and communities. They are helping people transition to life in the USA, sharing information about their legal rights and how to navigate the system. They research cures for cancers and other illnesses that literally steal life from us. They are our nonprofits, and they are serving us.

They are not just serving us, they are us. They represent the

best of who we are and who we can be. As we can, we have to step up to support these organizations financially and with our time and resources. They need our support more than ever, and we need them more than ever. Let us support those who have been standing in the void and are equipped to do so. Let us ask, how can we be of service? Better times are coming, and we can prepare for them by caring for each other. We are all in this together.



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## PICS OF THE WEEK

The Saginaw Police Department held their annual Police Awards and Memorial Ceremony on Wednesday, May 13. It was a special day to recognize all of the heroic officers who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to protect the Saginaw community and citizens, and to honor those officers who have lost their lives in the performance of their duties. Congratulations to Rianon Schneider, Professional Staff Member of the Year, and Officer Ervin Ward who received the 2026 Officer of the Year honor.



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