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Alma City Manager Phil Moore, Alma Mayor Mel Nyman, and Alma College President Jeff Abernathy in downtown Alma. The college has been a vital community partner since its founding in 1886, and aims to create a seamless environment between downtown and the campus. Alma College promotes a culture of service where its students meet local needs through participating with community agencies and organizations.
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The Michigan Municipal League is the one clear voice for Michigan communities. Our goals are to aid them in creating desirable and unique places through legislative and judicial advocacy; to provide educational opportunities for elected and appointed officials; and to assist municipal leaders in administering community services. Our mission is that of a nonprofit, but we act with the fervor of entrepreneurs to passionately push change for better communities and a better Michigan.

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So it’s a no-brainer that high quality education should be our new gold standard, the socioeconomic equivalent of a Holy Grail. Instead, Michigan has been hard at work disinvesting in education at an appalling rate, cutting higher education by 27 percent in the past decade.

Recently, Lansing has tackled the fiscal challenges of K-12 education through issues like union dues and the costs of teacher retirement and health care. What has been missing is a discussion on how we educate our young people to succeed. How do we prepare our students for college or trade school and then keep them in Michigan once they’ve completed their education? Some reports say over 46 percent of Michigan’s college graduates leave the state. While the latest research indicates the trend may be reversing, it’s still a fact that’s getting lost in the dollar-focused fight to “reform” our education system. We should be working on creative ways to help students succeed from kindergarten through college, and then give these successful kids a reason to stay.

There is hope. The new Michigan Competitiveness Committee in the House is looking at ideas like an income tax credit for Michigan college graduates who stay in Michigan. It is an unusual move—to publicly brainstorm about retaining talent. Yet it’s something they should be doing more frequently. It’s our best and brightest way to move Michigan forward in the new economy. And that’s knowledge we can take to the bank.

**It’s Time to Break Michigan’s Downward Spiral**

When we talk about placemaking and job growth, the catchphrase “knowledge-based economy” is often used as if it’s the next major evolutionary step for mankind. Well, that might be a tad lofty for the rise of humanity itself—I tend to think getting up on two legs, frontal lobe growth, and the invention of the Pop-Tart were probably bigger Darwinian success stories—but if we’re talking about survival in the new global economy, it is indeed the next big transition we need to make if we don’t want Michigan to go the way of the Neanderthal.

Michigan’s future prosperity largely depends on how well and how quickly we make the transition from the Stone Age of old school manufacturing to the Brave New World of knowledge-based jobs and industries.

Are we getting the message? Not yet, obviously. Michigan currently ranks a dismal 34th in the nation for the proportion of adults with a four-year degree. And that’s only one side of the equation. If we don’t have the resident talent base to offer as an attractant, those knowledge-based enterprises aren’t likely to set up shop here. And if they don’t set up shop here, even the talent we do have will be forced to leave in search of those jobs in other states. It’s a vicious downward spiral that is spinning us down the drain at an appallingly fast rate. In 2010, we ranked 39th in per capita income—dropping 21 states down the list in 10 years’ time. That’s a race to the bottom nobody should want to win.

Our state policy makers need to rethink some outdated formulas for economic success. The notion that business goes where the taxes and wages are lowest is only true in an economy fueled by cheap resources and an unskilled labor force. The exact opposite is true of today’s high paying knowledge-based jobs. These jobs quite simply go where the talented and well-educated workforce wants to be: places with a high quality of life and a high standard of living.

Anyone who argues the old approach is still good enough only needs to look at the auto industry: sure, they’ve brought back 65,000 jobs since the Great Recession of 2009, but those jobs now pay half what they did in the Good Old Days. We shouldn’t just want more jobs. An unskilled labor force scraping by on minimum wage should not be our measure of success. We don’t want to be Southeast Asia. We should want more high-paying jobs, which require highly skilled, highly educated people to fill them.

So it’s a no-brainer that high quality education should be our new gold standard, the socioeconomic equivalent of a Holy Grail. Instead, Michigan has been hard at work disinvesting in education at an appalling rate, cutting higher education by 27 percent in the past decade.

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Daniel P. Gilmartin
League executive director and CEO
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As we detailed in our 2006 “A New Agenda for a New Michigan” report, Michigan’s decline is caused, in large part, because Michigan—its citizens, enterprises, and communities—has been slow to adapt to a rapidly changing global economy. Today, leading-edge communities are leaving behind the Industrial Age. They are adapting quicker and better to a more knowledge-driven and entrepreneurial economy: the flat world.

Six years later, it is even clearer that the only reliable path to recreating a high-prosperity Michigan is to be concentrated in knowledge-based enterprises. There is a distinct pattern across the country that the states—and most importantly, larger metropolitan areas—with the most successful economies are those that are concentrated in the knowledge-based sectors: primarily health care, education, information, financial services and insurance, and professional and technical services. Michigan is lagging the nation mainly because of our slow growth in these dynamic, higher wage sectors.
How Michigan’s Economy Compares to the Nation’s

Our work is focused on how Michigan’s economy is performing compared with the nation’s economy and why. To do that we need to understand what is driving the national economy.

At the core of our work is the basic belief, since we were founded more than two decades ago, that globalization and technology are mega forces that are transforming the economy. The places doing best are those aligning with—rather than resisting—these new realities.

The long-term trend is clear. From January 1990 to July 2012, employment in low education attainment industries in the U.S. rose 14 percent compared with 34 percent in the high education attainment industries. So for more than two decades, whether the nation’s economy is expanding or contracting, the American economy has been going through a profound structural transformation from an industrial to a knowledge-based economy.

Michiganders Need to Confront Hard Truths

We are confident going forward that knowledge-based industries will continue to be where job growth is the strongest and average wages are the highest. Notwithstanding the current auto recovery-driven factory jobs increase here in Michigan, the long-term trends are clear. The inescapable conclusion is that what made Michigan prosperous in the past is no longer a path to prosperity. Michiganders need to confront some hard truths:

- Michigan’s prosperity last century was built primarily on good-paying, lower education attainment jobs. Those jobs are gone forever.
- The auto industry will never again be the major engine of prosperity in Michigan. It will be substantially smaller, employing far fewer workers and paying them less, with fewer benefits.
- The decline in autos is part of an irreversible new reality that manufacturing (work done in factories) is no longer a sustainable source of high paid jobs. Nor is it a source of future job growth. Manufacturing accounts for less than nine percent of the American workforce today. It accounted for 32 percent of the nation’s jobs in 1953 and 14 percent in 1998. Manufacturing’s share of American jobs has been declining for a long time.

Manufacturing Will Not Be Source of High Paying Jobs in Michigan’s Future

In Michigan, manufacturing employment fell from 897,000 in 2000 to a projected 530,000 in 2012. This includes an increase of about 65,000 factory jobs from the trough of the Great Recession in 2009. Factory jobs are now 13 percent of the Michigan workforce.

At the same time, the collapse of the domestic auto industry brought an end to high-paid unionized assembly jobs that had been the back bone of Michigan’s 20th century middle class. The new domestic auto industry assembly jobs now pay $14 an hour, rather than $28.

367,000 The number of manufacturing employment jobs lost in Michigan from 2000 to 2012.

39th Michigan’s national ranking in per capita income, an unprecedented drop of 21 places in 10 years.

Knowledge-based industries will continue to be where job growth is the strongest and average wages are the highest.

So whether it’s traditional Michigan industries like autos and furniture or new industries like alternative energy, factory jobs will not be a source of lots of new high paid jobs for Michiganders.

- Other industries that are often seen as drivers of the Michigan economy—farming and tourism—are also not a source of many good-paying jobs. Less than two percent of Michiganders work on a farm and on average it is not a high-paying industry. And tourism, although a likely source of job growth, is also a low-wage industry.
- Food processing and beverage manufacturing have been our strongest manufacturing industries since 2001, losing only 1,000 jobs combined. But in 2011, they employed 39,125 at an average wage of $42,937. (In comparison, auto assembly and parts manufacturing employed 131,353 at an average wage of $79,932 in 2011. This does not include white collar auto related jobs.) Clearly food and beverage manufacturing will not be replacing motor vehicle manufacturing as our primary manufacturing industry or be a major driver of the Michigan economy.
To be clear, we are not advocating that Michigan abandon these industries. They are, and will be, important parts of the Michigan economy, especially in smaller regions and rural communities, and as such deserve support. But they are not a path to high prosperity or a broad middle class. If the Michigan economy of the future is built on a base of factories, farms, food processing, and tourism, we will be a low prosperity state.

The world has changed fundamentally. We either adjust to the changes or we will continue to be poor compared to the nation.

High Prosperity Follows Knowledge-Based Enterprises

As the data in this report makes clear, the new path to prosperity is the broad knowledge-based economy. High prosperity is occurring chiefly in those places where knowledge-based enterprises across many sectors are concentrating. They are concentrating in areas with a high proportion of adults with a bachelor’s degree or more.

Human capital is the asset that matters most to knowledge-based enterprises. Governor Snyder summed it up best when he wrote in his Developing and Connecting Michigan Talent special message: “In the 20th century, the most valuable assets to job creators were financial and material capital. In a changing global economy, that is no longer the case. Today, talent has surpassed other resources as the driver of economic growth.”

Michigan has lagged in its support of the assets necessary to develop the knowledge-based economy at the needed scale. Building that economy is going to take a long time, and it will require fundamental change. But we believe it is the only reliable path to regain high prosperity.

The choice we face is, do we do what is required to build the assets needed to compete in the knowledge-based economy or do we accept being a low prosperity state?

To read the full report, go to michiganfuture.org.

Lou Glazer is president of Michigan Future, Inc. You may reach him at 734-747-8120 or lou@michiganfuture.org.
GUIDO AND SINCLAIR AWARDS

The Guido and Sinclair awards are two of the top honors given to individuals by the Michigan Municipal League. The 2013 deadline to submit nominees for the awards is **August 1, 2013** with the winners being recognized during the Michigan Municipal League’s Annual Convention September 17-20 in Detroit. Award details:

**THE MICHAEL A. GUIDO LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD**

**What:** Created in memory of Dearborn Mayor Michael Guido to honor a chief elected official who personifies professionalism and leadership, and is dedicated to the citizens in their community and advocates on their behalf in Lansing and Washington, D.C.

**Eligibility:** To be considered, nominee must be a current chief elected official from a Michigan Municipal League member community who has demonstrated excellence in leadership and shown perseverance in making a difference in his/her community for a sustained period of time.

**THE JIM SINCLAIR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD**

**What:** Created in memory of Rogers City Councilmember Jim Sinclair to celebrate a person dedicated to public service who has shown a passion and commitment to the League, enthusiastically supporting its mission and promoting its purpose.

**Eligibility:** To be considered, nominees must be affiliated with the League in the capacity of a municipal official, municipal staff, a League staff member, or an active participant in the League’s mission; and be active in furthering the cause of educating elected officials so that communities may benefit from the education and experience that their elected officials have gained.

Nominations must be received at League headquarters by **August 1, 2013**. To download a nomination form and related materials visit [www.mml.org/awards](http://www.mml.org/awards).
Big Rapids, Ferris State
On September 1, 1884—over 128 years ago—Woodbridge Ferris opened the Big Rapids Industrial School on South Michigan Avenue.

For an institution that started in rented rooms on the third floor of a business building in downtown Big Rapids, Ferris State University has grown into an educational enterprise. It now has 119 buildings on the 880-acre Big Rapids campus and also in downtown Grand Rapids, as well as partner sites at 17 community colleges around the state.

The university has an operating budget of over $270 million and it employs more than 1,400 full-time employees with an annual payroll of over $120 million. Ferris has an annual net economic impact of over $90 million, with two-thirds of the spending occurring in Mecosta County, where more than 65 percent of students attend classes on the main campus, and 88 percent of Ferris faculty and staff work in Big Rapids.

**Examples of Campus and Community Cooperation**

The university and the city recognize the continuing importance of communicating and cooperating with one another, and with their partners in the community. Examples include:

1. Monthly meetings during the academic year between representatives of the university, city, and Mecosta County to discuss topics such as infrastructure improvements, training opportunities with members of public safety, utilities, and recycling.

2. Quarterly town-gown meetings that bring together representatives from education, local government, and the community, including the university president, superintendent of public schools, and mayor.

3. The "Big Event," where Ferris State University students come together and give back to the community by performing household chores for area residents. The chores include washing windows, raking leaves, trimming bushes, small paint jobs, and more. Labor and supplies are provided completely free of charge, and last year more than 1,800 students volunteered at over 200 homes in the Big Rapids community.

4. Throughout the month of February, the university, in association with the Big Rapids community, holds the Festival of the Arts. It brings together numerous individuals, volunteers, artists, and event sponsors for a celebration of the arts, ranging from photography, to writing and music.

5. Members of the University’s administration participate in meetings with local manufacturers to say thank you for doing business in the Big Rapids community, and to look for ways to help the manufacturers, the university, and the community grow.
In 2008, the city embarked on improvements to its wastewater treatment plant, which services the university and two surrounding townships, totaling more than seven million. This year, the city will begin moving forward in making improvements to one of the two bridges that span the Muskegon River, increasing access to the industrial park, the Riverwalk system, and local streets, at a cost of nearly six million.

Education as a Core Legislative Principal
At the Michigan Municipal League’s 2012 Convention, one of the core legislative principles that was adopted recognized how educational institutions play a central role in growing and supporting a knowledge-based economy. The legislative principal also recognized how local government must effectively collaborate with such key community stakeholders and participate as a partner in decisions that impact the community.

Big Rapids and Ferris State University are truly joined at the hip as we both realize our mutual success depends on cooperation. Together we both grow and prosper. As such, we fully support the League’s emphasis on effective town-gown initiatives. This is something we both have recognized and appreciated for more than 128 years.

Mark J. Warba is the mayor of the city of Big Rapids. You may reach him at 231-796-5887.

David Eisler is the president of Ferris State University. You may reach him at 231-591-2500 or eislerd@ferris.edu.

Support for the United Way campaign in Mecosta and Osceola counties, helping to make the area’s United Way one of the very few in Michigan that continues to grow and meet its goal, albeit in a region that includes two of the poorest counties in the Lower Peninsula.

Providing assistance in other ways as needed. For example, during a period of upcoming renovation for the public library, the university library will provide services for local residents.

Campus and Community Growth—Campus
The city and the university have also maintained a commitment to campus and community growth and improvement, with some of the university highlights including: In 2001, the Ferris Library for Information, Technology and Education (FLITE) was completed, and in 2012, the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia opened in the lower level of the library. The mission of the museum is to use “objects of intolerance to teach tolerance and promote social justice,” while striving to become a leader in social activism and in the discussion of race and race relations.

In 2004, the Granger Center for Construction and HVAC opened, with various elements of its construction and its heating and cooling systems open to view in order to facilitate learning.

In 2012, the Michigan College of Optometry opened its state-of-the-art facility on the university campus. As the only College of Optometry in the state and one of just 20 in the country, the new building provides the resources the college needs to produce graduates to meet a growing need.

Campus and Community Growth—Community
In 2007, the city had the number one project in the state as part of the Vibrant Small City Initiative Program, allowing it to invest nearly three million to improve its downtown, including streetscape, façade improvements, way-finding signage, and cultural center enhancements.

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Afterschool Programs

By Rene Rosencrantz Wheaton

Libraries conjure up images of quiet rooms filled with books. While cataloging books and providing space for the studious is part of their role, the Marshall District Library staff has a bigger vision of their work. “We are interested in promoting education and want to be a cultural center in the community,” said Library Director Angela Semifero.

Afterschool Programs Cut

That outlook made it possible to see an influx of middle school students at the library not as a problem, but as an opportunity. When afterschool programs were cut at Marshall Middle School, kids ended up coming to the library, located a block away from the school, looking for something to do. “We had about 70 middle school students visiting our library every day. They didn’t have anything engaging to do after school,” Semifero said. “We wanted to develop some sort of enrichment program.”

The Community Responds

A call went out to the community, and concerned parties—downtown business owners, school officials, parents, library staff and others—got together to come up with something for students to do afterschool. The group brainstormed ideas and came up with these goals for a program to engage young energies: develop an appreciation for the arts, provide opportunities to learn entrepreneurial skills, help build self-esteem along with developing methods to cope with stress related to normal adolescent life, explore potential career paths, and learn essential planning and organizational skills. What resulted from the community brainstorming was the Afterschool Art Apprenticeship program, and it has been going strong since 2007.

The program started with some big goals, but organizers are pretty happy with what it has been able to achieve. Students who enroll in the program are able to take an eight-week
session of classes, creating fused glass, pottery, photography and even food. In addition to creating art, students also learn about marketing and putting their pieces on exhibit in the East End Art Gallery, a local nonprofit artist organization that now houses and runs the program.

**Students Instructed by Professional Artists**

“Students pay a fee to enroll in the program but we also have scholarships for those that might not be able to pay for the program,” said Ann Worth, the Afterschool Art Apprenticeship education coordinator. “Students learn from a professional artist.”

The East End Gallery features the artwork of more than 60 professional artists, many of whom have taught classes with the Afterschool Art Apprenticeship. The program offers three to four different specialties each session, with each studio having six to twelve kids in each class. Worth said the kids have responded to the small class size.

“They are used to being in classrooms that have 25 to 30 students, so they have said how much they appreciate the smaller class size where they can talk to the teachers,” Worth said. The classes end up teaching students a lot more than they might anticipate. Glass fusing incorporates mathematics when students use geometry as they cut the glass shapes.

**Teaching Kids Entrepreneurship**

“We also teach them about being entrepreneurs,” Worth said. “We talk about how much materials cost, how much it might take them to make an item, and what their time is worth. We talk to them about the market and what they think someone will be willing to pay for their piece.”

Local businesses have also stepped up to be involved, including FireHouse, a local pottery studio, and Flower Haus, a local flower shop. “We like working with local businesses and getting them involved with the kids,” Worth said. “It helps to get the kids to see how art can also be a business.”
“We had about 70 middle school students visiting our library every day. They didn’t have anything engaging to do after school. We wanted to develop some sort of enrichment program.”

The gallery provides a space for students to sell their work, including items like decorated pumpkins, mugs, and postcards featuring student photography and jewelry.

Students have studied computer animation, culinary arts, photography, fiber arts, and other mediums. Worth said they are always looking for new ways to offer students new and different opportunities. “The community has been very supportive buying the work, especially parents and grandparents,” said Worth.

Acclaim for the Afterschool Arts Program
Money raised through sales go back into supporting the program, including paying the artists who teach the classes. Grants from local foundations including the Calhoun County Community Foundation Alliance and the Marshall Community Foundation also help fund the program. The program has received plenty of recognition for its work including the Michigan Downtown Conference Partners Innovation Award in 2008, and Michigan State Librarian’s Excellence Award in 2008.

“It’s been very exciting to be a part of the program,” Semifero said. “When you talk to the kids involved, they are just so proud of themselves. Some of them have even started their own businesses selling their jewelry to classmates and at craft shows.”

Students have also been sought out to create centerpieces at weddings and create trophies for an award ceremony. Also, Afterschool Art Apprenticeship students collaborated with Marshall High School students to create a huge mural featuring glass tiles at the Marshall High School. “There have been many opportunities that have come directly from the program and that’s exciting,” Semifero said.

Bring Afterschool Arts to Your Community
Both Worth and Semifero said other communities can start a program like the Afterschool Art Apprenticeship. “You basically need people who are committed to it and an initial investment up front for materials and supplies,” Semifero said. “The main thing I’d like people to see is that collaboration really works, and I know there are other libraries that are eager to partner.”

Worth said it also helps for people to believe in today’s youth. “I encourage people to believe that kids that age are interested and involved,” Worth said. “It has been tremendous to see how the kids have responded to the program.”

Rene Rosencrantz Wheaton is a freelance writer. You may reach her at 810-444-3827.
In order for Michigan cities to sustain vibrant economies and healthy communities, they must implement bold strategies that ensure more of the residents attain college degrees and valuable postsecondary certificates. A recent study by CEOs for Cities found that 58 percent of a region’s economic health comes from the educational attainment of its residents. Another one from Georgetown University predicts that 62 percent of all Michigan jobs will require postsecondary education by the year 2018. The benefits of increased levels of education to municipalities are substantial. Per capita income increases, and subsequently so do tax revenues. Unemployment goes down and so does reliance on public benefits. Crime goes down and volunteerism goes up. The demand for a more highly skilled workforce is growing—and municipal leaders have a unique opportunity to be a part of the supply-side solution.

According to the National League of Cities (NLC), municipal officials are uniquely positioned to form new partnerships with leaders in K-12 and higher education, workforce development, and business to increase postsecondary completion rates. With support from Lumina Foundation, NLC’s Institute for Youth, Education and Families has developed a new series of publications highlighting city strategies to increase local college completion rates. They have also analyzed the role that mayors are playing to support college access and success in their cities. In the last few years, municipal leaders in dozens of cities have launched new, multi-sector collaborations to dramatically increase the proportion of residents in their communities who obtain post-secondary degree and credentials. City officials are increasingly focused on postsecondary success as a core component of their economic development strategies.

In Michigan, municipal leaders have the opportunity to leverage new resources for their communities by joining a growing coalition of networks committed to ensure more of their residents pursue and complete education beyond high school.

In 2008, a group of high-level leaders representing K-12, higher education, business, government, non-profit organizations, and philanthropy, began meeting...
Place-Based Scholarships

Inspired by the Kalamazoo Promise, place-based scholarship programs are known as “Promise Zones.” A 2008 state statute allows up to 10 communities to establish “Promise” scholarships that provide a last-dollar scholarship (the difference between tuition and what is paid for by Pell Grants and TIP scholarships) for every student within the community to complete at least an associate degree at a local community college.

The 10 Promise Zones communities are: Baldwin, Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Detroit, Hazel Park, Jackson, Lansing, Muskegon County, Pontiac, and Saginaw.

There are no need or merit requirements; “place-based” means the student must graduate from a local high school and live within the boundaries of the community.

Each Promise Zone is governed by an 11-member Promise Zone Authority (PZA). To start, the PZA must raise funds from private sources for two years to demonstrate the sustainability of the scholarship. If they are successful, they benefit from a tax capture mechanism—half of the growth in the state property tax within the community is captured to support the scholarship in perpetuity.
In their recent respective publications, both MCAN and NLC have outlined a set of action steps for municipal leaders who are concerned about low college completion rates and want to identify and advance solutions. As a first step, local officials can convene leaders from across sectors to develop a more coordinated strategy to provide students with the support and services they need to graduate with a postsecondary credential.

Additional action steps mayors/presidents should take include:

- Conducting an inventory or scan of local college access and success efforts across sectors, institutions, and community partners;
- Hosting consultative sessions to listen to the perspectives of various stakeholders;
- Establishing a leadership structure to guide and sustain college access and completion efforts;
- Seeking consensus regarding measurable outcomes and key benchmarks or milestones to assess progress;
- Creating data sharing agreements and protocols in order to assemble a fuller picture of the municipality’s education pipeline;
- Developing and implementing action plans that have the potential to “move the needle” on college completion; and
- Persistently raising awareness and celebrating early victories to build and sustain momentum.

To read more about the NLC Postsecondary Success Action Guides, visit www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/institute-for-youth-education-and-families/education/higher-education. For Michigan municipal leaders, MCAN can provide grant funding, hands-on technical assistance, and additional tools and resources. For more information, visit www.micollegeaccess.org.

Brandy Johnson is the executive director of the Michigan College Access Network. You may reach her at 517-454-1387 or brandy@micollegeaccess.org.

Marjorie D. Cohen is a senior associate at the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families. You may reach her at 202-626-3052 or cohen@nlc.org.
DETERMINATION

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Not every community is home to a college or university where a town-gown partnership can be forged. But many municipalities are finding they can join forces with their local K-12 school districts to strengthen their shared community.

Earlier this spring, village officials, business leaders, and educators mixed up a new recipe for creative collaboration in the village of Jonesville with the first-ever Jonesville SOUP (Students on Upward Pursuits). The grassroots fundraising concept is a simple one, based on the original Detroit SOUP, in which community members contribute a small donation to share a meal while listening to their neighbors pitch ideas for local arts and small business projects. At the end of the evening, everyone votes on their favorite project, with the winner receiving the dinner’s proceeds to launch their dream.

Jonesville’s then-Village Manager Adam Smith (who has since moved on to manage Mackinaw City) was inspired to try a local version after hearing about the concept at a Michigan Municipal League seminar on government and community innovation, held in March at the Innovatium in Ann Arbor. Also in attendance were County National Bank Jonesville Branch Manager Don Germann and Hillsdale County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Christine Bowman.

“[Jonesville SOUP] is the fusion of civic engagement, entrepreneurship, placemaking, micro-financing, and our next generation of leaders.”

By Elizabeth Shaw
Linking Business, Government, and Education

The trio saw it as a great opportunity to connect the rural community’s business, municipal, and education sectors. Smith put his own innovative twist on the idea by focusing the Jonesville version on students. Within days, the idea had won the collaborative support of the village council, Jonesville Community Schools, and the Hillsdale County Chamber of Commerce.

They also engaged corporate partners to ensure the event’s success.

“Being the inaugural event, we had no idea what kind of response to expect and we wanted to be able to guarantee a certain amount for the award. Our corporate partners made that possible,” said Smith. The meal was catered at cost by Olivia’s Chop House, a local eatery, and sponsored by Martinrea Jonesville LLC, a manufacturer for the automotive and industrial sectors that is Hillsdale County’s largest employer.

Attendees paid five dollars for a soup and salad dinner in the Jonesville High School cafeteria, while local high school students pitched their best and brightest ideas for community-based projects.

“...we all have a vested interest in our kids... not just the schools.”

High Schoolers Get Civically Engaged

“It’s pushed our kids to think how they can do things to help not just themselves but those in the community. It’s sparked ideas about making the community look better, taking pride in the community, looking out for their fellow students,” said Jonesville High School Principal Dustin Scharer. “It shows we all have a vested interest in our kids, that it’s not just the schools.”

Elizabeth Shaw is communications coordinator for the League. You may reach her at 734-669-6318 or eshaw@mml.org.

Three student groups signed up to vie for the $500 award to put their idea into action. The school’s SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter sought funds to help bolster their annual post-prom party. A group of landscape design students displayed plans for an interpretive nature garden at the elementary school. The winner was the school’s National FFA (Future Farmers of America) chapter, which is building a community garden to provide produce for local food banks and for the agriculture program’s food processing class.

Community leaders are already planning how to make next year’s event even bigger and better, said Germann, hopefully turning it into a community tradition that will continue long after its originators have moved on.

“It’s the fusion of civic engagement, entrepreneurism, placemaking, micro-financing, and our next generation of leaders,” said Smith. “This is the kind of thing that could really start our young people on the road to success. Maybe someday they’ll look back and say this is where it all began. It’s all about building relationships, and us just being the facilitator.”

Back row left to right: Christine Bowman, Don Germann, Adam Smith, Dustin Scharer. Front row left to right: Brevin Bowman, Elli Guisinger, Adrianna Brackman, Taylor Dunn, Josh Sanders, Wesley Raker.

Municipal and business leaders took the notion of Detroit SOUP and modified it for high schoolers. Three student groups pitched community-based projects, presented, and voted on them in one night.
Since its founding in 1886, Alma College has stood as a vital community partner, dramatically affecting the lives of those living in mid-Michigan and beyond. The college’s founding was made possible by Ammi Wright, a lumberman, businessman, and civic leader who gave 30 acres of land and more than $300,000 to found and sustain the institution in its early years—a sum equivalent to more than $6.2 million today.

More than 125 years later, Alma College continues to value its role in the mid-Michigan community. The campus hosts the annual Alma Highland Arts Festival, which brings thousands of visitors to mid-Michigan to celebrate their Scottish heritage.

As part of its mission, the college also promotes a “culture of service” in which students meet local needs through participation with numerous community agencies and organizations.

One of the key questions in the college’s most recent planning effort was how it could leverage its presence to ensure that the college can thrive together with the community. The resulting plan, while establishing important educational goals, includes an emphasis on creating a sustainable campus and
MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

DETROIT

2013 CONVENTION

SEPTEMBER 17-20

DETROIT MARRIOTT AT THE RENAISSANCE CENTER

Photo credit: Vito Palmissano
Join hundreds of municipal officials who will gather from every corner of the state to the urban core where American industry was born and the heart of Michigan still beats.

The Michigan Municipal League 2013 Convention takes place on the state’s largest metropolitan stage, where local leaders will learn strategic lessons in placemaking, civic engagement, entrepreneurism, urban planning and socioeconomic development that can translate to communities of every size.

Take a ride on a mobile workshop to explore key city sites. See the work of the doers and dreamers who are redefining what it means to be a city in today’s global village. Sit down face-to-face with the peers and partners who are powering a statewide vision for change.

There is no place in the world like Detroit. And there is a Detroit that many have yet to meet. Come see for yourself what the rest of the world is talking about.

Join us at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center on September 17-20, 2013. It’s the place where the Michigan of tomorrow is being born today.
**PRE-CONVENTION WORKSHOPS**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17**

These workshops are available for an additional fee of $75 each.

### Finding Funding: Preparing Your Municipality for the Next Decade 1:00-4:00 pm

Dr. Beverly A. Browning will present resources and discussion-generating ideas to help elected officials, council members, city managers, and staff charged with financial change responsibilities. Brainstorming questions include:

- Are you seeking 5% or more of your general operating budget from private sector funding sources?
- How can you find private sector funding partners?
- Have you set up a nonprofit community improvement fund or collaborated with a nonprofit partner to maximize your private sector grants and contributions?
- Is your website setup for online contributions? Does it have a community partner’s page with links?

The presentation will focus on ways to work with the media.

### Crisis Communication 1:00-4:00 pm

How would you communicate to your residents during a massive power outage? If something terrible happened, would you just hope for the best or are you prepared for the worst? Walker Public Safety Director, Catherine Garcia-Lindstrom, will discuss communication lessons learned when a police officer was killed in the line of duty in their city. Holland Mayor Kurt Dykstra, an avid social media user, and Matt Bach, the Michigan Municipal League’s director of media relations, will present effective crisis communication techniques and ways to work with the media.

### Most Common OMA & FOIA Mistakes & How to Avoid Them 1:00-4:00 pm

Have questions about the Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act? Foster Swift has you covered. Municipal officials need to know these Acts like the back of their hand. But both are filled with nuances that can easily lead to innocent missteps that result in time-consuming headaches, bad publicity, and even costly and potentially damaging litigation. Attorneys from Foster Swift’s municipal team will cover the most common OMA and FOIA pitfalls, and ways to avoid them.

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**AGENDA**

**Tuesday, September 17**
- 9 am-4 pm Pre-Convention Workshops
- 2-5 pm Registration Hours
- 2 pm Board of Trustees Meeting

**Wednesday, September 18**
- 7:30 am-5 pm Registration Hours
- 7:30-8:30 am Michigan Women in Municipal Government Breakfast
- 8:30-9:30 am Elected Officials Academy Board Meeting
- 10-11:30 am Welcoming General Session
  - Parade of Flags
  - Community Excellence Awards (CEA)
- 11:30 am-1 pm Lunch
- 12-3:30 pm Silent Auction Bidding
- 1:20-1:15 pm Breakout Sessions
- 2:30-3:45 pm Breakout Sessions
- 4-4:45 pm Annual Meeting
- 4:45-5:45 pm Governance Committee Meeting
- 7 pm Foundation Reception at Dossin Museum
- 7:05 pm Take Me Out to the Ball Game! Foundation Fundraiser

**Thursday, September 19**
- 7 am-12 pm Registration Hours
- 7:30-8:30 am Michigan Association of Mayors Breakfast
- 8 am-2:45 pm Silent Auction Bidding
- 8:30-10 am General Session
- 10:15 am-1 pm Mobile Workshops & Lunch
- 1:15-2:30 pm Breakout Sessions
- 3-4 pm General Session
- 4:15-5:30 pm Breakout Sessions
- 6-9 pm Reception & Annual Awards Banquet

**Friday, September 20**
- 8:30-10 am Closing Breakfast & General Session
- CEA Winner Announced
- 10:45 am-12 pm MBC-LEO Meeting

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**REGISTER ONLINE @ CONVENTION.MML.ORG**
Mobile Workshops
See all the amazing things happening in Detroit. Mobile workshops on Thursday, September 19 are included with the cost of registration. Topics include:
- Farmers Markets
- Housing
- Entrepreneurship
- Arts & Culture–Anchor Institutions
- Innovation Districts

Take Me Out to the Ball Game!
Foundation Fundraiser
Wednesday, September 18, 7:05 pm
Comerica Park, 2100 Woodward Ave, Detroit
Cost: $35
The Michigan Municipal League Foundation has reserved a block in sections 147-148 (lower level) for the Detroit Tigers v Seattle Mariners. Your reserved seat includes transportation to and from the Marriott. Package price also includes a donation to the MML Foundation.

Community Excellence Award
You Be the Judge!
Wednesday, September 18, 10:00 am
Join us in this good-natured competition and cheer for Michigan’s best. See the Community Excellence Award regional finalists unveil their winning presentations.

You are the official judges. Your votes alone will decide which community takes home the Cup. After the general session, cast your vote at the official Community Excellence Award Voting Booth.

Don’t miss the Cup Presentation Breakfast on Friday, September 20, where you can enjoy breakfast with new friends and be part of the sixth annual Community Excellence Award Cup Presentation.

MML Foundation Online Auction
The 2013 auction begins online August 9 and continues at Convention. Bid on unique gifts representing communities across Michigan, or highlight your own community by donating an item showcasing local businesses, attractions and talent. Learn more on the auction website at www.biddingforgood.com/mmlfoundation or the MML Foundation at www.mmlfoundation.org.

SPONSOR THE CONVENTION
Sponsoring the Annual Convention provides you with a unique opportunity to communicate with professionals from local government. Are you looking for networking and relationship building? Presentation opportunities? Company branding? We will do our utmost to meet your needs for involvement and exposure. Contact Terri Murphy at 734-669-6342 or tmurphy@mml.org for more information.

GENERAL INFORMATION
HOW CAN I REGISTER?
Online
All credit card payments must be completed online via My League (mml.org). My League is your secure, interactive online League account. It’s available to all members and nonmembers, with a quick and easy sign-up process.

Via Printable Form
Visit mml.org to download and print a faxable registration form. Complete and fax to 734-669-4223, then mail with check payable to: Michigan Municipal League, PO Box 7409 Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7409.

HOUSING & TRAVEL
Host Hotel
Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center
Phone: 313-568-8000

Reservation Process
Housing reservations will only be accepted for those who have registered for Convention. After registering for Convention, a confirmation email will be sent to you within 48 hours. The confirmation email will contain your registration information and your personalized housing registration code. The hotel requires that you provide your personalized code in order to make reservations during the Convention.

Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center
Housing Rates
Standard – $129/night
Group room rate cutoff is Friday, August 23, 2013 at 5:00 pm (EST).
Hotel rate is subject to applicable state and local taxes (currently 15%).

Foundation Fundraiser
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community. It states directly: “We will assist our city of Alma—where we aim to create a seamless environment between the downtown and the campus—as well as communities across mid-Michigan in order to help our region thrive in the decades to come.”

There is much to be thankful in our small community of Alma. Business is growing in the downtown. Within view of town, the largest wind farm in Michigan has risen, with 167 monuments to the new economy. The efforts by community leaders in collaboration with Alma College professors and students to address environmental challenges caused by a chemical company that left the area decades ago continue to make meaningful progress.

All this good news is especially welcome in Alma, where we have had our share of challenges. The most recent economic downturn hit mid-Michigan hard, and in October 2010, a ruinous fire all but destroyed a prominent landmark at the center of our downtown, Alma’s former opera house. In such a close-knit community, nearly every citizen felt the impact of these and other challenges.

And yet, the values and benefits of living in a college town still appeal to many. Recent developments are evidence that collaborative town-gown partnerships are making a difference.

“As a college, we are committed to a sustainable future. That’s why we do not plan to build new free-standing residence halls on campus. The city of Alma has beautiful buildings downtown; let’s use them.”

Former City–College Demarcation Erased
In 2011, the college purchased a vacant building and moved its bookstore off campus and across the street into a location that formerly represented a geographic divide between town and gown. The college also partnered with Stucchi’s—a successful ice cream store that was destroyed in the downtown Opera House fire—and brought it in under the same roof. The new business is thriving, a welcome addition to the downtown where students and community members come together.

Kurt Wassenaar, an investor with local roots committed to revitalizing the downtown Alma business district, bought the burned Opera House and is determined to save it from demolition. Today, the building is undergoing major renovations that will restore its historic features.

The College Corner bookstore bridged the former demarcation between campus and downtown Alma. The college bought the property and moved its bookstore to downtown Alma.
The historic Ammi Wright Opera House in downtown Alma has survived wind, storm, and fire in the more than 130 years since it was originally constructed.

Even though the 55,000-square-foot building was gutted by fire in 2010, the structure has proved hardy, thanks to the quality workmanship of its original builders. Representatives from the National Historic Trust have, in fact, called the Alma Opera House one of the best-preserved buildings in the state.

Thanks to Kurt Wassenaar, an investor committed to revitalizing the downtown Alma business district, the Opera House is undergoing major renovations that will restore its historic features while providing new retail opportunities on the ground floor and student apartments on the second and third floors.

For Alma College, the residential space addresses a major need as the college strives to continue its enrollment growth.

“This is an opportunity to leverage the presence of the college for the benefit of the downtown,” says Alma College President Jeff Abernathy.

“Working together with investors and community leaders to place student residents downtown is beneficial long-term for both the college and the community.”

Discussions with community leaders about placing students downtown began before the 2010 fire, though the fire hastened the planning, says Abernathy.

“For both the city and college to thrive, we must look at the resources we already have instead of waiting for resources that may never come,” says Abernathy. “College students are the likeliest resource for downtown living.

“As a college, we are committed to a sustainable future,” he says. “That’s why we do not plan to build new free-standing residence halls on campus. The city of Alma has beautiful buildings downtown; let’s use them.”
When the Opera House is restored, it will house approximately 50 Alma College students while creating 18,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor.

The student housing arrangement is part of an agreement with Wassenaar, a Virginia architect who purchased the Opera House following the 2010 fire intending to restore the building to historic detail and quality. A native of Alma, Wassenaar is president of Wassenaar Design Group, an architecture, planning, engineering, and development company.

Wassenaar is transforming the building’s upper levels into residential units and support spaces for about 50 Alma College students while creating 18,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor. The building will have a catering kitchen, elevator, sprinkler system, and fire stairs. If construction stays on schedule, the apartments will be completed this August, with students moving in at the beginning of the fall 2013 semester.

“The residential apartments will have private rooms with big windows grouped in suites with kitchens and bathrooms, much like the Wright Hall model,” says Wassenaar. “The Opera House space itself will be restored essentially as a large living room—a multipurpose space that can hold up to 150 people for studying, presentations, or events.”

The ground floor will accommodate seven retail bays, including a laundry. Wassenaar also hopes to attract a grocery shop, a coffee/lunch café with outdoor seating, and a bistro-style dinner restaurant.

“Having grown up in Alma literally four blocks from the Opera House, I always admired the beauty of the building and its construction,” says Wassenaar. “It is worth saving because it is a significant piece of Michigan history. It was one of the first mercantile buildings in central Michigan.”

“We are renovating the building as a National Trust Project, which imposes some costs and extra care, but it’s worth it,” says Wassenaar. “It’s important to preserve small-town America. It’s the right thing to do.”

Ammi Wright played a significant role in both the founding of Alma College and the early development of the town of Alma. The connection excites Wassenaar.

“This project couldn’t happen without both the college and community working together,” says Wassenaar. “Dr. Abernathy’s vision to engage the city and bring students into the fabric of the city is important. I’m very excited about this partnership with Alma College.”

Students Intern for Governments and Nonprofits
Alma College has set an aggressive goal to place a large number of interns across mid-Michigan in an effort to help nonprofits and governmental entities that lost so many resources in the recent downturn. Such work is hugely beneficial to Alma students even as it will help to sustain the communities across our region. Alma College students can learn how to leave positive footprints in Alma and wherever they go in the future.

Fall Festival Connects the College and the City
Alma College’s Center for Responsible Leadership and the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce sponsor an annual Fall Festival in October in downtown Alma. The purpose of the event is to strengthen the connection between the college and community and to encourage community members, merchants, and students to meet and interact in a positive and educational atmosphere. Activities include merchant specials and giveaways, raffle drawings, face and pumpkin painting, activities for kids, and more.

Reaching out to the community is a part of Alma College’s mission to “prepare graduates who think critically, serve generously, lead purposefully, and live responsibly.” We remain committed to the exciting work of building and nurturing community partnerships that will be key to the college’s future as well as that of our city and region.

Mel Nyman is the mayor of Alma. You may reach him at 989-463-8336.

Jeff Abernathy is the president of Alma College. You may reach him at 989-463-7111.
Cities that embrace consolidations are going to be the cities that thrive in the future and continue to deliver quality services.

— WESTLAND MAYOR WILLIAM WILD

For communities that are looking at budget deficits, this successful public safety consolidation could serve as a blueprint for significant cost savings.

— WAYNE MAYOR AL HAIDOUS
A significant cost saving, common-sense service consolidation is providing confidence to the citizens of Wayne and Westland that regionalization efforts can occur and be successful.

The cities of Wayne and Westland undertook the tremendous challenge of merging our fire departments. Each city offered its own full-service fire department, Wayne for 102 years, and Westland for 47 years. When I met with Wayne Mayor Abdul "Al" Haidous we discussed the possibility of mutual collaborations, and out of that conversation came the possibility of a fire department merger. It took two meetings to get city council buy-in after the two cities did their own research to see how it would benefit each community.

The transition has gone smoothly, and the attention to detail paid off with no interruption to services and at no additional cost to our taxpayers. It is turning out to be a positive regional collaboration effort and an excellent example of how consolidations can actually improve the level of service to our residents while saving some serious tax dollars.

**How it Happened**

Many fire departments (and their communities) around the country are struggling to make ends meet. Unlike other city services, fire departments are in a position to do more regionalized work since most already train together in mutual aid agreements. “The fire unions from both cities have been at the table with their respective elected officials throughout the years, helping to figure out how to work with the tight budgets we have faced, due to the sluggish economy and erosion of property values, so bringing them into the discussions early on made perfect sense,” said Wayne Mayor Al Haidous.

Collectively, Mayor Wild, Mayor Haidous, and Wayne City Manager Bob English, established a three step approach focused on creating a fully operational consolidated fire service. Step one provided for a single fire chief for the participating cities. Both fire chiefs were due to retire, however, Westland Fire Chief Michael Reddy was keeping his options open with the prospect of a joint department. Step two focused on the consolidation of the headquarter command functions which is now located in the city of Wayne’s Fire Administration Building. This building allowed for the merging of the administration staff and operations; it reduced administrative duplication; and took advantage of expected retirements and attrition. Step three involved the consolidation of all fire operations. The firefighters unions were critical to the success of this merger and were fully supportive which allowed us to create one set of guidelines and operating procedures.

The decision was made to move forward and the steps were implemented quickly. The group put together a proposal within 30 days, and that proposal revealed an annual savings to both communities of approximately $320,000. Plus, the new department would absorb every employee, with no layoffs. “For communities that are looking at budget deficits, this successful public safety consolidation could serve as a blueprint for significant cost savings,” said Mayor Haidous.
What Changed
The merger presented each community with four to five additional firefighters each day, moving from 71 full time personnel to 90 (Westland 71, Wayne 19) while improving response times.

Acting as one unified department, with the support of our unions, we created the new “We are One” logo, combining both fire departments patches. This has already been accomplished with the firefighters wearing the new logo on their uniforms operating as one unified department.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I credit both mayors...and of course the unions, for without their support and agreeing to come to the table, this merger would not have been possible.

— WAYNE-WESTLAND FIRE CHIEF MICHAEL REDDY

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Other changes included the elimination of duplications in management, equipment, and supplies; future employee costs including lower healthcare and pension costs; and the sharing of a fire chief, which transpired on July 1, 2012. These changes were also tied to the $320,000 in cost savings previously mentioned, that both communities will now see annually.

Competitive Grant Assistance Program
As an extra incentive, the Wayne-Westland Fire Departments applied for funding through the state’s Competitive Grant Assistance Program (CGAP), designed to provide incentive-based grants to offset costs associated with mergers, inter-local agreements, and cooperative efforts. The Wayne-Westland Fire Department was awarded $791,787 to offset the costs of implementation and the consolidation of equipment, facilities, staff and personnel training, and the merging of information technology.

“I credit both mayors for their leadership and councilmembers of both cities which ratified the merger unanimously, and of course the unions, for without their support and agreeing to come to the table, this merger would not have been possible,” said Wayne-Westland Fire Chief Michael Reddy. “For other communities that want to accomplish something like this, you’ve got to bring the unions to the table early on. Give your memberships a voice so you can get the necessary buy-in. Many mergers have failed because this critical step was missed,” added Chief Reddy.

Key Supporters
Not only did this merger receive full union endorsement, it also received two thumbs up from Michigan Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley. “The new Wayne-Westland Fire Administration headquarters represents a new way forward for local governments to reduce costs through consolidation while continuing to meet their critical public safety duties. We applaud Wayne and Westland for setting a great example. It’s this type of teamwork that will help reinvent Michigan,” Calley said.

The city of Westland is proud to be a leader in the consolidation of services and we look forward to having one of the most modern full-service advanced life support fire departments in the state of Michigan.

“I want to personally thank the city of Wayne, the Wayne and Westland City Councils, and the Western Wayne Professional Firefighters Union for their ongoing support of this important and historical endeavor, and of course my good friend Mayor Al Haidous,” concluded Mayor Wild.

William Wild is the mayor of the city of Westland.
You may reach him at 734-467-3200.

Legal counsel that helps local governments work effectively.

Our Local Government Law practice group works with local governments and public authorities to ensure the efficient and cost-effective delivery of vital public services. We provide specialized legal expertise in areas as diverse as zoning and land use planning, bond issues, special assessments, tax increment financing, DDA's and other public authorities, labor contracts and arbitration, employee benefits, elections, environmental regulation and many other matters affecting local governments. For more than 50 years, skilled Mika Meyers attorneys have helped public-sector entities meet the ever-increasing demands of their constituents and communities.

For more information on how our Local Government Law team can assist your community, visit mmbjlaw.com.
On December 21, 2012, the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) updated its Hazard Communication Standard (MIOSHA Part 42, Part 92, and Part 430) by aligning the standard with the United Nation’s Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS). Sixty-seven nations around the world have adopted this classification system. The GHS’ purpose is to provide employers and employees with a common system of chemical classification and labeling thereby reducing possible confusion among workers over the potential hazards that certain chemicals may pose to them. This is increasingly important in our global economy in which chemicals in use in American workplaces may come from countries around the world.

DECEMBER 1, 2013 DEADLINE
One of the major requirements of the revisions to the MIOSHA standard is that all employers must train their employees on the new GHS system by December 1, 2013. For the majority of municipalities and other public entities that do not manufacture, sell, or distribute hazardous chemicals this training will focus on the new format for chemical container labels and the accompanying safety data sheets (SDS) that manufacturer’s provide to customers. The GHS system of labeling and identification is intended to clearly communicate specific hazards associated with each chemical to employees through the use of easy to understand pictograms and signal words.

CHANGES
The revised MIOSHA Hazard Communication standard imposes other changes, among them the renaming of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) to Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and new posters identifying the location of the entity’s mandatory chemical inventory as well as new and revised Safety Data Sheets. Everyone likely knows this inventory as the big red MSDS binder, and there is probably a poster in the employee break room indicating the location of the inventory and the location of new and revised MSDS. Under GHS, material safety data sheets will now just be referred to as safety data sheets (SDS) and your chemical inventory should be labeled similarly and new posters identifying the location of the SDS binder and new or revised SDS should replace the old ones using the term MSDS. Free copies of these posters and sample Safety Data Sheets are located on the MIOSHA website at www.michigan.gov/miosha.

FREE WORKSHOPS
MIOSHA will conduct a number of free, half-day workshops in Lansing in July, August, and September, highlighting the revisions to the hazard communication standard and the new requirements of the GHS system. Specific days and times can be found on the MIOSHA website. MIOSHA also has various resources available to assist employers with completing the required training on the new GHS system through the Consultation, Education and Training (CET) division of the agency. These resources include training videos, printed materials, and a series of classroom sessions on GHS throughout the state over the coming months. Interested parties may contact the MIOSHA CET division by phone at 517-322-1809 or online at www.michigan.gov/miosha.

FREE TRAINING DATES:
July 30
August 21
August 28
September 5

David Sperry is a loss control consultant for the League. You may contact him at David.Sperry@meadowbrook.com.
Hiring a local government manager is arguably one of the most important decisions that an elected official or body will make. Local government managers are tasked with ensuring an organization’s fiscal integrity, assisting with the vision of the community, and providing efficient and effective services. There are a variety of motivators that a potential candidate considers when deciding to apply or accept a position as a local government manager. The Michigan Local Government Management Association’s (MLGMA) Recruitment Committee conducted a survey to gather data on the factors local government managers weigh when making career decisions. Understanding these motivators can be critical to an elected body’s ability to recruit a manager that best fits its community, and further, can offer insight as to why some communities may struggle to attract good candidates.

Considerations when choosing a professional manager are an ever-changing dynamic with new and unique challenges. First, local governments face a talent shortage as 78 million baby boomers retire in the U.S. economy with only 50 million Gen X’ers to replace them. Research studies indicate that there are a greater proportion of baby boomers in the public sector than in the private sector.

A value shift exacerbates the demographic crisis. For instance, aspiring managers from Gen X are committed to their careers, but are far more likely to insist on balancing personal and family commitments with work.

Because of the talent shortage, managers are making career choices based on the reputations of city councils/commissions. Since talented managers are in greater demand, they can pick and choose opportunities and avoid “toxic” political cultures.

**Compensation: Think Total Package**

Salary is a strong motivator; however, of 104 local government managers surveyed, retiree health care and a defined benefit program were also identified as strong motivators. Councils interested in attracting the best candidates should consider an overall compensation package when setting the salary range.

**Salary Increase**

Municipalities looking for a more experienced manager may be pulling someone away from an existing job. How much of a salary increase would it take for a local government manager to consider another position? About 60 percent of survey respondents indicated an 11 to 30 percent increase would entice them to consider a move.

**Severance Package**

How important is it to include a severance package as part of a contract? Seventy-one percent of respondents indicated that a severance package is a “must have,” while 26 percent indicated that it is a primary or secondary consideration. In regard to the minimum acceptable severance duration, 60 percent indicated five to seven months. Eighty-three percent indicated a minimum acceptable severance duration of between five months to one year.

**Relocation Package**

The cost and logistics of a move are also a key part of the job hunt equation. Therefore, a relocation package may be an important factor in attracting candidates. Of the relocation benefits that were surveyed, moving expenses and temporary housing rated the most desirable, at 97 percent, and 53 percent, respectively.

**Location, Location, Location...**

Survey results indicate that living closer to family members, and preference of family to live in a specific location are strong motivators, while living outside of Michigan and working in a rural area are weak motivators. When asked about location as it relates to a major metropolitan area, 42 percent of survey respondents prefer living within 30 minutes of a major metropolitan area. There were strong preferences for geographic location—61 percent would be willing to move to West Michigan, 46 percent to mid-Michigan and only nine percent willing to move anywhere in Michigan. When asked if living within the corporate boundaries of the jurisdiction where the manager works is critical to being effective, the results were split, 51 percent yes and 49 percent no.
Rate the impact of the following scenarios on your potential interest in a position (lower scores are more favorable):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Guarantees I Would Apply</th>
<th>Improves Interest</th>
<th>Does Not Matter</th>
<th>Decreases Interest</th>
<th>I Wouldn’t Apply / Withdraw my Application</th>
<th>Rating Average (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayor or council speaks unfavorably about the community’s need for a manager and/or questions efficacy of council/manager form of govt</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor and/or council can’t agree on what to pay for the position</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor or council appear to act together on most decisions</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor or council speaks unfavorably about administration, department heads, or other staff</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An internal candidate is applying</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable political environment</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of tough labor relations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of poor management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable fiscal condition; good budget management</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent reductions in force/staffing cuts</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of high turnover among top administrators</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of long-term managers</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good geographic location</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad schools</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad housing stock</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong commercial/industrial base</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad “quality of life” (i.e. parks, recreation, arts/culture, shopping, entertainment, etc.)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong downtown/city (village) center</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive comments about the community and/or organization “on the managers’ grapevine”</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is unclear whether the community will properly handle a request for confidentiality in the application process</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of a hiring search firm by the council</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professional Development is Key
By their nature, local government managers are drawn to challenges and thrive on professional development. The survey results confirm that local government managers would be motivated to consider another position if it presents an opportunity to tackle new professional challenges as well as if the employer values professional development. Interestingly, survey data was split when it came to working in a small or large municipality. Managers don’t overwhelmingly favor one or the other.

Why Go? It’s All About Relationships
Often an underappreciated variable, the relationship with the council/commission is an important factor when contemplating a new position. Concerns about the current employer were motivators to managers pondering a position change. Ethical concerns about elected officials rated as the strongest motivator; and pressure at current employer, philosophical difference of community vision, and political instability rated as strong or very strong.

Why Stay? A Mixed Bag
Thirty-four percent of respondents would not be drawn to an attractive job opportunity at this time because, “I love the job that I have and nothing can tempt me!” Others love where they live (21 percent) or don’t think they can sell their house (21 percent). The remaining 24 percent are staying because of family-related reasons.

How Long? At the Pleasure of the Elected Body
Twenty-five percent of respondents prefer to stay in a position for three to five years, 42 percent prefer to remain in a position for six to 10 years, and 24 percent prefer to remain in a position for 11 to 20 years. Thirty-three percent expect to stay in a position for 3 to 5 years, 38 percent expect to remain in a position for 6 to 10 years, and 22 percent expect to remain in a position for 11 to 20 years.

Other Factors
What else influences potential interest by local government managers in a new position? Elected officials may be surprised to find out that hiring a professional recruiter, having a history of long-term managers, and political stability improve the interest level of local government managers in a position. A history of tough labor relations, poor management, and recent reduction in force/staffing cuts do not weigh as heavily as other factors. Check out the numbers for yourself.

Michael Hughes is the city manager of Sturgis. You may reach him at 269-659-7222 or mhughes@sturgismi.gov.
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Founded in 1668, the eastern Upper Peninsula is home to Michigan’s oldest European settlement, Sault Ste. Marie. Sault Ste. Marie is home to Lake Superior State University, founded in 1946. The university is known for its academic programs in such fields as fisheries and wildlife science, fire science, engineering, chemistry, and environmental science.

Sault Ste. Marie was recently selected by the Michigan Municipal League as one of five pilot communities in the state to demonstrate what local actions can be taken to enhance the community’s attraction in the eyes of today’s workforce. The League, through its Center for 21st Century Communities, has identified eight assets that can create a vibrant city.

These assets include:
1. physical design and walkability
2. green initiatives
3. cultural economic development
4. entrepreneurship
5. multiculturalism
6. technology
7. transit
8. education

Sault United
As a result of the pilot project, and by focusing on the list of assets above, Sault Ste. Marie identified its primary goal as evolving from simply a town with a university into a true university town. Since the project began over a year ago, a steering committee was established and named “Sault United.” Sault United is composed of community leaders representing the city, the university, War Memorial Hospital, the area and intermediate school districts, the economic development corporation, and the downtown development authority.

Sault United has already taken great strides strengthening the town-gown relationship. Four subcommittees have been formed to put ideas into action: a student/parent welcome committee; a sporting event coordination committee; a transportation committee; and a community arts promotion committee.
Engaging Students in the Community
The student/parent welcome committee assisted this year in engaging new and returning students with the city in a number of ways. First, over 300 local businesses and organizations participated in “Lakerpalooza,” a vendor event hosted by the university. Second, the university offered free shuttle rides during “Laker Week” (orientation week) to allow students to “Sample the Sault.” Downtown Sault Ste. Marie collaborated with the university to host the first ever photography scavenger hunt in which students had to complete objectives like getting their picture taken with a local business owner, for example. Over 50 students rode the shuttle into downtown to participate in this event.

Another successful event was the first ever Lake Superior State University “haunted homecoming parade.” For years the city held its downtown Halloween festival separately while the university held its events on campus. This year, Sault United worked to connect the two. As thousands of children and their families “trick-or-treated” at downtown businesses, Lake Superior State University clubs and student groups paraded “haunted” floats through the crowds.

Creating Business–Student Connections
One of the best outcomes from these beginning stages of town-gown efforts are the direct connections being made between businesses and student groups. Sault United board members frequently hear new stories about how students are collaborating with businesses and local organizations to complete class projects, raise money, volunteer, or find future employment.

Fortifying ‘the Soo’ as a University Town
Sault Ste. Marie’s evolution into a true university town will continue as Sault United’s subcommittees make progress in the areas of student involvement, sports, arts, and transportation, and the League’s support has been invaluable in these efforts. However, the League’s involvement doesn’t stop here. The city has recently been chosen for a visioning and planning grant to develop a critical portion of the downtown that is currently composed of a number of long-vacant and obsolete properties. The city and the university, along with the other members of the Sault United committee, will be collaborating on this visioning project. One of the primary goals of this visioning process will be to lay out area plans that will aid in fulfilling town-grown goals.

Sault United is enthused to continue the work of transforming Sault Ste. Marie into a true university town, and looks forward to maintaining a fruitful partnership with the Michigan Municipal League.

Anthony Bosbus is the mayor of Sault Ste. Marie. You may reach him at 906-632-8212 or myrbosbous@sault.com

Dr. Tony McLain is the president of Lake Superior State University. You may reach him at 906-635-2202 or tmclain@lssu.edu.
The city of Flint made headlines in April when emergency manager Ed Kurtz announced that city councilmembers would be required to complete the first level of the League’s Elected Officials Academy in order to receive their partially restored pay.

“I believe that as elected officials we need to lead by example and do everything we can to have the best tools and information to serve the community. I am committed to going through the same program required of the city council,” said Flint Mayor Dayne Walling. “All of us in Flint have been going through the school of hard knocks but there isn’t anything wrong with adding formal training and creating time to learn from our peers in other communities.”

While the mandate was understandably controversial given the context of the situation, Flint isn’t the first or only community to recognize the value of professional development for its elected and appointed officials. Back in 1997, the Elected Officials Academy (EOA) was created to offer a broad array of educational programming for all elected officials of cities, villages, and member urban townships.

The city of Linden offers a financial incentive for councilmembers who complete each level of the EOA program. It’s a modest stipend—an additional $25 per year added to their base salary for each level accomplished—but it’s a public statement to both council and citizens that the city believes there is a tangible return-on-investment for educating the leaders of local government.

The program’s four levels are designed to guide officials from the basic fundamentals of responsible governance, to the highest degree of advocacy and civic engagement. In the last 15 years, 152 individuals have graduated from Level One; 110 from Level Two; and 82 from Level Three. Level Four was added in 2012, with two graduates in its first year: Lossing and Durand Mayor Deb Doyle. Currently, there are 275 active participants in the program.

“I have benefited from the educational offerings through the Elected Officials Academy during my tenure on the city council—going on 15 years—and it’s brought new ideas and concepts to enhance our community,” said Lossing.

Others have gone beyond training elected officials. In Cedar Springs, for example, formal training is required for members of the city planning commission, whose actions often have far-reaching legal and socioeconomic consequences.

EOA Level One Education Award

Requirements:
Advocacy ----------------------------- 3 credits
Attendance at a League Conference-------- 4 credits
Core courses --------------------------- 8 credits
Elective courses ----------------------- 10 credits

Core courses:

Elective courses cover a wide range of topics, including green energy, legal issues, strategic planning, economic development, and web-based technologies.

From the Cedar Springs Planning Commission bylaws:

"Within the first 12 months of being appointed to the planning commission, each member shall attend at least 12 hours of seminars or continuing education which involves zoning and planning issues as approved beforehand by the city manager. Thereafter, each member of the planning commission shall attend at least three hours of seminars or continuing planning education per calendar year as approved beforehand by the city manager. The city shall pay for all such approved seminars and continuing planning education as the city budget allows."

“It’s especially helpful so new commissioners learn their roles and responsibilities, and it provides a basis for making sound legal decisions,” said City Manager Thad Taylor. “For experienced commissioners, continuing education helps keep them abreast of new developments, trends, and legal decisions, and most importantly, it keeps their knowledge refreshed.”

Interested in learning more? Visit mml.org and click on Training/Events.

Elizabeth Shaw is communications coordinator for the League. You may reach her at 734-669-6318 or eshaw@mml.org.
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Factors resulting in legal warrantless entry and search of home

FACTS:
Local and state police officers responded to a 911 call from Susan Stricker requesting help for her son, Andrew, who was suffering from an apparent drug overdose. In the call, Susan indicated that she did not know what drugs Andrew had taken but that he was “falling down...losing consciousness, [was] not in touch with reality,...and [could not] move.” Cambridge Township EMS personnel were the first to arrive on the scene, but in accordance with township policy, waited until police officers arrived to secure the premises. A Cambridge Township officer then arrived and was allowed in the house by Kevin Stricker, Andrew’s father. The officer had previously arrested Andrew and was aware that he was a heroin addict. The officer observed Andrew and noted that he looked very pale. Susan then asked the police officer to leave. She indicated that she had not called the police, but rather EMS. The officer stated that, according to policy, it was necessary for the police to secure the premises. Susan then stated that there was no longer any need for EMS and the officer left the premises. Kevin called 911 and reported Susan’s earlier call as a false alarm.

After the refusal by the Strickers to allow police officers to enter the premises or to permit medical personnel to check Andrew on the front porch, officers ultimately entered the house without a warrant and searched the premises. Andrew was found hiding in the basement. He was transported by ambulance to the hospital for treatment. Other officers conducted a search of the entire premises. The Strickers repeatedly disobeyed lawful officer commands throughout the search and were arrested for resisting and obstructing arrest.

The Strickers filed suit claiming that the police officers violated their Fourth Amendment right to be secure in their home against an unreasonable entry and search.

QUESTION:
Did the warrantless entry and search of the Strickers’ home violate their Fourth Amendment right against an unreasonable entry and search and seizure?

Answer according to the Federal District Court: No.

Answer according to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals:
No. The Court began its analysis by stating that the Fourth Amendment protects the right of people to be secure in their homes against unreasonable searches and seizures. Citing the U.S. Supreme Court, “Searches and seizures inside a home without a warrant are presumptively unreasonable." Exceptions to the warrant requirement have been recognized based on a reasonableness standard. In this case the Court examined medical emergencies under the exigent circumstances exception. The Court noted that the combination of the 911 call soliciting help for a drug overdose, the police’s independent knowledge and observations confirming the reported overdose, and the Strickers’ attempts to prohibit access to Andrew despite the initial call for help made it objectively reasonable for the officers to believe that Andrew was overdosing on drugs and was in need of immediate medical care.

The Court also found that the search to find Andrew and to conduct a protective sweep of the house was reasonable and that the search of the premises in an attempt to determine what Andrew had ingested to aid EMS in its treatment was justified as well.

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Q: What’s the difference between a charter amendment and a charter revision? We want to change the clerk’s position from elected to appointed, which requires a change in our city charter. How do we know if we need to amend the charter, or revise it?

A: The two forms of legally authorized changes are by revision or amendment of the charter. The Home Rule City Act allows cities to make substantial or nominal changes in their charters by different routes. Charter revision implies re-examination of the entire document, and that it may be recreated without obligation to maintain the form, scheme, or structure of the former charter.

Amendment implies that the general plan and scope of the charter will be maintained, with corrections to better accomplish its purpose. Revision suggests fundamental change, while amendment is a correction of detail, according to the Michigan Supreme Court.

A change in the form of government will require charter revision and not merely amendment. However, something like changing the clerk’s position from elected to appointed would be done by amendment (not revision).

The following charter revision and charter amendment resources can be found at mml.org:
- Charter Revision Handbook
- Charter Amendment One Pager Plus Fact Sheets
- Charter Database

Q: Is it legal for municipalities to use credit cards?

A: There are two Public Acts that allow municipalities to use credit cards for procurement (PA 266 of 1995-MCL 129.241 et seq) and for accepting payments (PA 280 of 1995-MCL 129.221 et seq). Both require some type of action by the local legislative body. To use credit cards for procurement, a written policy is required. The Act lists what must be included in the policy. An authorizing Resolution is required to accept payments by credit cards. There are other requirements and restrictions as well. Sample policies are available on the League’s website at mml.org.

Q: What is the maximum amount for which we can write a contract without going out for public bids under state law?

A: There is NO state law requiring public bids on municipal contracts. However, many cities and home rule villages have such a requirement written into their charters; in addition, some cities and villages have ordinances or policies establishing a threshold amount over which contracts must be bid. Even if your municipality does not have such a requirement, it is often prudent to solicit bids on large projects. Sample policies are available on the League’s website at mml.org.

Q: When special events are held in our community, there is a drain on tax-supported services such as police, DPW, etc. How do other communities prevent this from happening?

A: To partially address the problem, consider adopting a special events policy and/or ordinance. Sometimes a permit or license is required and a fee is charged. The permit application can require the applicant’s plans for police and fire protection, health and sanitation facilities, parking facilities, electricity needed, etc. Permits from other agencies may be required—health department, etc. Proof of insurance coverage is usually required. At least one special events ordinance in our files requires the applicant to reimburse the city any costs incurred by the city as a result of the event, unless waived by the city council. Sample policies are available on the League’s website at mml.org.

Q: How are quotas for liquor licenses determined?

A: In cities, incorporated villages, or townships, only one specially designated distributor (SDD) license shall be issued by the Liquor Control Commission for every 3,000 of population, or fraction thereof. The quota requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Commission if there is no specially designated distributor licensee within two miles, measured along the nearest traffic route, of the applicant. MCL 436.1533. A public license shall not be granted for the sale of alcoholic liquor for consumption on the premises in excess of one license for each 1,500 of population or major fraction thereof. In-depth information regarding quotas is found in MCL 436.1531 of the Liquor Control Code.

The League’s Information Service provides member officials with answers to questions on a vast array of municipal topics. Send your municipal inquiries to info@mml.org, or call 1-800-653-2483.
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Utica is located in Macomb County, midway between Pontiac and Mount Clemens. This tiny city of 5,000 is nestled among the giant cities and urban townships, but it is our heritage and location on the Clinton River (one of the five largest in Michigan) that really makes us unique. 

The city has long recognized what a wonderful asset the Clinton River is—but has not had the funds nor the wherewithal to develop its use and importance. Our vision for the river and the city’s redevelopment were linked intimately together, but without money, very little could be done. We began a DDA in 1992, but dollars came slowly. The federal budget stepped up for both widening M59 and supporting a hike/bike trail, but Utica had to work with MDOT to get land along the river, a better tunnel under M59, and replace our old, used pedestrian bridge to meet federal hike/bike guidelines. Then as we resurfaced streets, we added 10 feet in width for our hike/bike trail.

Finally, with the help of MDOT and MNR Trust Fund grants to do the first large segment of the trail, the DDA made the Riverwalk actually happen. Aesthetics are important, and they recognized the value of the hike/bike trail as an economic driver connection to our downtown. With the city’s talented DPW to build it, they authorized a $1 million project for about $300,000—what a bargain!

Utica has emerged as a popular place for canoeists and kayakers. Our Riverwalk at Memorial Park is stunning—it is the centerpiece of our projected two-mile linear park along the Clinton River. It was the perfect spot for our annual Ice and Fireworks Festival. It also anchors our Riverwalk Summer Festival in June. Thousands attend our car show, carnival, piggy race, outdoor stage shows, Old Mill Arts & Crafts show and fireworks along the river. Hundreds of bicyclists pass through our Riverwalk each month. It is attractive to all ages and is universally accessible to all; even our fishing platforms and canoe livery in Heritage Park are completely accessible to all along the same trail. Downtown Utica has bike racks, benches, and pedestrian amenities that make it both walkable and bicycle friendly.