



2016

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Small Business*



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Learn more at [Michiganbusiness.org/PMBC](http://Michiganbusiness.org/PMBC)



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PUBLISHER | Michigan Celebrates Small Business  
 PRINTER | Foresight Group, Lansing, Michigan  
 PUBLISHING SERVICES | Courtesy of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation  
 EDITORIAL | Jennifer Deamud, Michigan Small Business Development Center  
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DESIGN | Andrea Hunter, Michigan Economic Development Corporation  
 Michigan Celebrates Small Business website: [www.MichiganCelebrates.biz](http://www.MichiganCelebrates.biz)

Michigan Celebrates Small Business (MCSB) honors and recognizes Michigan's small business and those champions that support them. Michigan Celebrates is presented by its founding organizations: Michigan Economic Development Corporation; Small Business Association of Michigan; Chris Holman (current president of Michigan Business Network); Small Business Advocate; Michigan Small Business Development Center (Managing Partner of Michigan Celebrates); U.S. Small Business Administration—Michigan District Office; and Edward Lowe Foundation.

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May 5, 2016



Dear Friends,

Michigan's entrepreneurial history runs deep. We are a state of thinkers, doers, and makers. New enterprises not only mean new jobs, they mean new investment and revenue in every Michigan community.

This year's Michigan 50 Companies to Watch continue our innovative lineage. These small businesses power Michigan's job creation, and recognizing their success and spirit is at the heart of Michigan Celebrates Small Business.

The state has worked tirelessly to create a robust business climate for small businesses to thrive. We are engaging partners across the state with the principal goal of narrowing the skills gap through innovative and effective collaboration to create opportunity for all who dare to dream.

And it is working. According to ForeSee, nearly two-thirds of Michigan businesses surveyed described the state as having a positive business climate and would promote Michigan as a place to start a business.

Congratulations to the 2016 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch and to Michigan small businesses everywhere. Thank you for your commitment to your community and to our state as we continue to build a stronger Michigan and a brighter future.

Sincerely,

Rick Snyder  
Governor

### EDWARD LOWE FOUNDATION

The Edward Lowe Foundation supports second-stage entrepreneurs—companies that are beyond startup with the aptitude and appetite for continued growth—along with the business communities that serve them.

Established in 1985 and based in Cassopolis, Michigan, the foundation is a nonprofit organization that delivers programs for second-stagers through entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs), such as chambers of commerce, small business development centers, municipal and state economic development organizations as well as business associations.

The foundation has developed a series of leader retreats to address the special challenges faced by second-stage companies (typically with 10–99 employees and \$1 million to \$50 million in annual revenue). The goal is to help leaders and management think strategically—and learn how to transform that strategic thinking into action.

CEO roundtables using the foundation's PeerSpectives® protocol provide a peer-to-peer environment to enhance a leader's decision-making prowess. The foundation provides the framework and training for organizations to run the roundtables.

To help second-stagers with strategic issues, the foundation hosts the National Center for Economic Gardening®, which provides access to a team of vetted researchers and sophisticated corporate tools. For more information, visit [www.edwardlowe.org](http://www.edwardlowe.org).

### MICHIGAN BUSINESS NETWORK

Michigan Business Network, a 24/7 Internet broadcast and podcast platform, is the resource for communication and information for the entire Michigan business community and beyond. Fresh programming is offered daily through their online audio web-stream broadcast that provides listeners with the knowledge and resources needed to enhance their business. Tune in on your computer or mobile device to hear great stories about small to medium-sized enterprises, entrepreneurs, start-ups and inventors. Michigan Business Network's website highlights many subjects designed to help your business prosper including chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, all business organizations, Michigan-based business news, legislative updates, profiles, marketing, technology and event planning. Keep them in mind as you are preparing and scheduling events—they have a statewide business calendar for your reference. Let Michigan Business Network be your toolbox for building a better company and download their application on your Apple or Android mobile device. Just search "MBN Live" or "Michigan Business Network." Follow them on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. For more information, visit [www.michiganbusinessnetwork.com](http://www.michiganbusinessnetwork.com).

### MICHIGAN SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Michigan has always been home to dreamers, doers, innovators and entrepreneurs. The Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) exists to support these entrepreneurs by making sure they have the resources and knowledge to successfully start and grow their businesses. The Michigan SBDC business growth specialists provide services to prepare your second-stage company for the next phase of growth. This team of consultants has expertise in accounting, finance, marketing, operations and strategic planning to help you assess your company's strengths and areas of opportunity. Businesses across the state work with the Michigan SBDC business growth team to develop custom growth strategies, and we are excited to celebrate many of them at the 12th Annual Michigan Celebrates Small Business Awards Gala. For more information, visit [www.SBDCMichigan.org](http://www.SBDCMichigan.org) or call 616.331.7480.

### PURE MICHIGAN BUSINESS CONNECT

Pure Michigan Business Connect is a public/private initiative created to uncover and develop new business opportunities and support services for Michigan companies. This multi-faceted program helps Michigan companies connect to new procurement opportunities through matchmaking summits and [puremichiganb2b.com](http://puremichiganb2b.com), a dynamic online marketplace with more than 26,000 registered Michigan companies. Through its matchmaking summits, the program has hosted 70 global purchasers, netting more than \$250 million in bid opportunities and more than \$40 million in new contracts for Michigan companies. Additionally, Pure Michigan Business Connect has worked with some of Michigan's largest companies to initiate in-state procurement pledges of \$2 billion and secure commitments of more than 30,000 free business service hours ranging from accounting and legal services to marketing and website assistance. For more information: [www.puremichiganb2b.com](http://www.puremichiganb2b.com)

### SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

The Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM) helps small businesses succeed by promoting entrepreneurship, leveraging buying power and engaging in political advocacy. Our vision is simple: Michigan needs to promote economic gardening, which fosters the growth and prosperity of our own Michigan-based small businesses. With over 25,000 small business owner members, SBAM's political power helps to champion second-stage business entrepreneurs by influencing legislative policy. With support from small businesses such as yours, we are able to keep small business issues foremost in the minds of elected officials. Unlike many other business organizations, everything SBAM does focuses solely on the needs of small businesses with no conflict from big business. Running your small business is your passion—being your champion is our passion. SBAM's member benefits and services save you time and money while connecting you with fellow owners, entrepreneurs, and small business leaders. Count on the Small Business Association of Michigan to get you what you need to tackle human resources issues, legal questions, operational challenges, government and regulatory issues and more. For more information, visit [www.sbam.org](http://www.sbam.org)

### SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION—MICHIGAN DISTRICT OFFICE

The SBA recognizes that small business is critical to our economic strength, to building America's future and to helping the United States compete in today's global marketplace. For this reason, it is the SBA's core mission and responsibility to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. This mission is achieved by focusing on the three "C"s: counseling, contracting and capital. SBA funded resource partners provide free, confidential business counseling and low cost training, help small businesses gain access to federal procurement opportunities and provide access to capital to America's growing businesses. The SBA Michigan district office would like to congratulate the winners recognized at this year's Michigan Celebrates Small Business event. Please visit us at [www.sba.gov/mi](http://www.sba.gov/mi).

2016 Small Business Administration (SBA) Awards

Michigan Small Business Counselor of the Year (SCORE Counselor of the Year)  
Allen Wilson, SCORE, Muskegon counselor

Michigan Small Business Consultant of the Year (SBDC Consultant of the Year)  
Denise Hansen, SBDC business consultant

Michigan Veteran-owned Small Business of the Year  
**Contract Professionals Inc.**  
Steven York, founder/CEO  
James Cowper, president

Michigan Small Business Exporter of the Year and Regional Winner  
**Firstronic LLC**  
John Sammut, president/CEO  
Steven Fraser, vice president of operations  
Peter Barclae, chairman  
Wally Johnson, vice president of finance

Michigan Women-owned Small Business of the Year  
**Motawi Tileworks**  
Nawal Motawi, founder and owner

Michigan Small Business Person of the Year  
**RB Construction Company**  
Russell Beaver, president

Additional 2016 Michigan Celebrates Awards

Main Street USA Award  
**Mrs. Glee's Foods LLC**  
Jim LeCureux, owner

Michigan Small Business Innovation Award  
**ContentOro**  
Bob Chunn, CEO

Michigan Government Contractor of the Year Award  
**Armor Express**  
Matt Davis, president/CEO

2016 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch

Abcor Industries  
Advaita Bioinformatics  
Afa Inc.  
Avomeen Analytical Services  
Banza  
BizStream  
Bromberg & Associates  
Cash n Carry Flooring/Bay View Flooring  
Celsee Diagnostics  
Clarity Voice  
Coastal Automotive  
Code Blue Corporation  
Collage.com  
Credibly  
Energy Design Service Systems  
Firebolt Group Inc.  
foodjunky.com

Goldfish Swim Schools  
Hayhoe Contracting Services  
Image Data Conversion  
Inmatech  
Innereactive Media  
IP Consulting Inc.  
ITC Incorporated  
JMC Electrical Contractor LLC  
Johnstone Supply  
Local Orbit  
McCardel Restoration  
Millendo Therapeutics  
MMI Engineered Solutions Inc.  
Modustri  
Mopec  
Mount Bohemia  
Neuvokas Corporation

Parjana® Distribution LLC  
Public Lumber & Millwork  
Recruitment Management Consultants  
Red Level  
RightAnswer.com Inc.  
RightBrain Networks  
Service First Logistics Inc.  
Service Professor Inc.  
Smart Bottoms  
Stewart Industries LLC  
Stormcloud Brewing Company  
Tome  
Truscott Rossman  
Verdeterre Contracting Inc.  
Web Ascender  
ZeroBase Energy



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“WHAT'S DTE ENERGY DOING FOR MICHIGAN BUSINESS?”

In 2015, DTE spent \$945 million with Michigan-based suppliers, exceeding our target of \$725 million. And as a key partner in the Pure Michigan Business Connect Initiative, we've spent more than \$4.6 billion with Michigan businesses over the last six years. These dollars don't just support business, they support jobs in our state and help people and communities thrive.

The DTE Energy Foundation has been a proud supporter of the Michigan Celebrates Small Business Awards event since 2010.





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B7103

## Let Michigan help you sow the seeds of entrepreneurial success

*by Karen McCumber, marketing copywriter  
Michigan Economic Development Corporation*



### Thomas Edison

sowed the seeds of his curiosities at his Port Huron boyhood home. He was the epitome of an entrepreneur, holding 2,332 global patents. While his famous quote, “Success is 10 percent inspiration and 90 percent perspiration,” is still true, Michigan’s entrepreneurial business climate has evolved in ways Mr. Edison couldn’t have imagined.

Unimagined technology. Creation and proliferation of industries such as aerospace and defense. The explosive need for venture capital. Complex global markets. These modern realities are seen by today’s entrepreneurs as opportunities, not barriers, to bring their innovations to the marketplace. But they realize to be successful, they need access to a robust business climate, one that is committed to their challenges—and that’s Michigan.

### Think Silicon Valley is the nation’s technology hotbed? Think again

It’s Michigan. Fortune.com proclaimed: “Why Detroit could be the next Silicon Valley (and vice versa).” CNNMoney asks, “Detroit: The next Silicon Valley?” while the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis ranks Detroit No. 3 in the U.S. as a hotbed for high-tech jobs.

Automation Alley, Michigan’s leading technology business association, recently published its annual report that backs up these bold headlines. According to its survey, technology executives believe southeast Michigan is a better place for technology companies to do business than Silicon Valley. The region beat out the California stronghold in greater return on investment, a lower cost of capital, greater support from their state governments, ease of retaining talent, and a lower tax burden.

That confidence is well-placed. Seventeen MEDC-designated SmartZones—distinct geographic technology clusters—have been established throughout the state to promote resource collaborations between universities, industry,

research organizations and government. The SmartZones include technology business accelerators that help facilitate the commercialization of technology emerging from research in Michigan universities and private companies.

## Michigan is changing the way the world moves, again

Michigan remains the epicenter of the global automotive industry. The state produces 20 percent of the nation's vehicles, more than any other state. It's home to 63 of the top 100 North American auto suppliers. And it ranks first in the concentration of electrical, mechanical and industrial engineers. The automotive industry has come a long way since Ford's Model T, and it's evolving again.

"In Michigan, we're building the next generation of technologies in mobility and continuing our role as the global leader for automotive design, research, and development," says Kevin Kerrigan, senior vice president of the Michigan Automotive Office. He's referring to connected and autonomous vehicles.

Once again, Michigan is reinventing how the world will move. Ann Arbor's \$6.5 million Mcity is the only test track in North America dedicated to simulated real world research of automated and connected vehicle technology. Historic Willow Run will be home to the American Center for Mobility, a collaboration with industry, government, academia, and private-sector partners. The center is located within a high-tech corridor of southeastern Michigan, where nearly three-quarters of all auto-related research in the world is conducted.

## Michigan manufacturing isn't just about cars

History has proven that Michigan can successfully apply its manufacturing capabilities to more than just automobiles. That ability has allowed diversification of Michigan's industries, including aerospace and defense.

Aerospace isn't the first industry that comes to mind when you think of Michigan, but it's rocketing up the list. There are more than 600 aerospace-related companies, with contracts totaling more than \$69 million during fiscal year 2014. Named

by PricewaterhouseCoopers as the second most attractive state for aerospace manufacturing, Michigan Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul providers (MROs) serve leading aerospace companies including General Electric, Lockheed Martin, NASA, and Pratt & Whitney.

Defense is another advancing industry. In fiscal year 2014, \$3.3 billion in contracts were awarded, providing almost 52,000 defense-related Michigan jobs. The Michigan Defense Center is leading key initiatives like "Protect & Grow," which focuses on protecting our existing defense missions while exploring new growth industries, such as aerospace, unmanned vehicles technology and cyber. "The Michigan Defense Center team is doing something that small businesses have been asking for 20 years—to reduce entry barriers to doing business with the federal government," says Sean Carlson, the center's vice president.

The center is also providing critical economic gardening tools to assist small business in winning government contracts. The Bid Target System, designed to help companies find the right defense opportunity, is a game changer according to experts. Last year, the center launched the Proposal Writing Services program to assist small businesses that haven't pursued a government contract in the past. Companies are eligible for up to \$10,000 in match dollars to hire assistance in writing their first bid.

MEDC is also helping the state strategically position itself as a leader in lightweight multi-materials development for leading-edge defense manufacturing processes. Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow (LIFT), an industry-led consortium, is supported

with a \$10 million grant from MEDC over the next five years. MEDC has also pledged \$15 million for the next five years to support The Institute for Advanced Composites Manufacturing Innovation (IACMI), a recipient of a \$70 million U.S. Department of Energy grant to develop and deploy advanced lightweight materials.

## Increasing the flow of venture capital

The state is aggressively helping small businesses maximize their access to capital resources. Currently there are 129 venture-backed companies in the state, a 70 percent increase over five years ago. Of the \$4.8 billion under management in Michigan (including outside Michigan-based firms), 74 percent is invested in startups, and 23 percent is capital available for new start-ups.

The state supports the entrepreneur ecosystem throughout ideation, start-up and growth. At the idea stage, the Michigan Emerging Technology Fund supports Michigan technology-based companies by providing match funding on federal research funding.

During the startup stage, MEDC's Pre-Seed Fund 2.0 supports high-tech startup companies as they near commercial viability by providing early-stage capital not widely available through the private sector. As a central fund to the Michigan SmartZone Network, these funds are designed to prepare companies for follow-up on private investment.

And during the growth stage, the Small Business Development Center enables entrepreneurs to bridge the gap between technology development and commercialization, including access to capital.

## Today's marketplace is beyond Michigan's backyard

Looking beyond your "own backyard" can be a key component in entrepreneurial success. Ninety-five percent of the world's consumers are located outside of the U.S., highlighting the importance of opening foreign markets to Michigan goods and services.

MEDC has facilitated Michigan export sales of \$855 million since 2012. Its International Trade Program helped companies export to 126 countries last fiscal year. MEDC has six international trade offices, providing services to companies interested in expanding their sales to Brazil, Canada, China, Mexico, and the European Union (offices in England and Germany). These services include customized market research, market entry strategy, pricing and competitive analysis, and trade mission assistance.

Potential exporters can also gain financial assistance through the federal State Trade Export Program (STEP) administered by MEDC. STEP provides direct reimbursement of 50 percent of costs (up to \$12,000) of approved export-related activities such as trade missions, international or domestic trade shows, foreign market sales trips, and website or marketing material translation costs.

## Pure Michigan Business Connect

Pure Michigan Business Connect (PMBC), a program developed by MEDC, connects buyers to suppliers of Michigan goods and services. Michigan companies can sign up for this free business-to-business network to expand their supply chain within the state. Businesses can also access Michigan service providers, including pro bono and discounted services, such as legal, accounting, web development, logistics and human resources.

The Pure Michigan Economic Gardening® program is designed to provide technical research assistance to

qualified second-stage growth companies. The Economic Gardening® service helps companies identify new markets and sharpens their competitive edge using high-end corporate research tools.

## Michigan is stronger than ever

The Pew Charitable Trusts say Michigan's comeback is the biggest success story since the Recession. According to ForeSee, nearly two-thirds of Michigan businesses surveyed describe the state as having a positive business climate and would promote Michigan as a place to start a business. The state needs to keep the momentum, with entrepreneurs continuing to drive Michigan forward. One of Thomas Edison's lesser known quotes, "If we did the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves," is nowhere truer than Michigan. Now let Michigan help you sow the seeds of entrepreneurial success. Mr. Edison would be proud.





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## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2016 AWARD WINNERS!



FROM THE TEAM AT  
HUNGERFORD NICHOLS CPAs + ADVISORS!

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## Small Business Is Our Business

Whether it's time to open, expand or upgrade your small business, your credit union is with you every step of the way. Over the past year, Michigan's credit unions contributed more than \$2.2 billion in business lending. Visit your neighborhood credit union and see what it means to be a member.

**MICHIGAN'S**  
credit unions

[CULinkMichigan.com](http://CULinkMichigan.com)

## Economic impact: 2016 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch

### Economic impact in 2015

**\$436 million** in total annual revenue in 2015  
**26.8 percent increase** compared to 2014

1,447 full-time equivalent employees in 2015  
 1,336 in Michigan; 111 out of state

582 new jobs projected for 2016  
 490 in Michigan; 92 out of state

### Regional distribution

Region	# of companies
Metro Detroit	20
Southeast	10
West	9
South Central	5
Upper Peninsula	2
Northwest	2
East Central	1
Southwest	1

### Sector distribution

Business sector	# of companies
Information technology	9
Manufacturing	9
Professional services	7
Construction	5
Life sciences	3
Retail trade	3
Scientific or technical services	3
Entertainment or recreation	2
Software development	2
Wholesale trade	2
Finance and insurance	1
Medical devices	1
Publishing	1
Telecommunication	1
Transportation and warehousing	1

### Increasing impact

From 2012 through 2015, these companies generated \$1.2 billion in revenue and added 699 employees (both in Michigan and out of state), reflecting a 119 percent increase in revenue and 93.6 percent increase in jobs for the four-year period. That translates into a 30 percent annual revenue growth and 24.6 percent annual growth in employees.

These companies project continued growth in 2016, with a 34 percent revenue increase and 40 percent growth in employees (both in Michigan and out of state) compared to 2015. If their projections hold, these companies will have generated \$1.8 billion in revenue and added 1,282 employees over the last five years — a 194 percent increase in revenue and 171.6 percent increase in jobs since 2012.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 (projected)
Revenues in millions	\$199	\$257	\$344	\$436	\$586
Employees*	747	951	1,155	1,446	2,029

\* full-time equivalent in Michigan and out-of-state



One of the hallmarks of the Michigan Celebrates Small Business awards is the mantra, “Once a Winner, Always a Winner.” When companies are selected for a Michigan Celebrates award, they wear the banner of “Alumni” and are encouraged to continue sharing news of their latest achievements. As part of the annual recognition of incoming Michigan Celebrates honorees, we are proud to share the recent milestones of 45 alumni.

 Michigan 50 Award

 Innovation of the Year

 Exporter Small Business of the Year

 Small Business Person of the Year

 Main Street USA

 Woman-owned Small Business of the Year

2013	906 Technologies LLC, Marquette; Lee Francisco, founder/CEO	Continued national expansion of software development. Introduced a new 401(k) for employees and new focus on employee education.	
2009	Alliant Enterprises LLC dba Alliant Healthcare Products, Grand Rapids; Bob Taylor, owner/CEO	Added 65 products to new product pipeline. Expanded employee development and a 50 percent 401(k) match. Started a contract-manufacturing unit in a 20,000-square-foot site in Walker.	
2012	Argent Tape and Label Inc., Plymouth; Lynn Perenic, president/CEO	Added new products and capabilities, and improved processes and equipment. Charitable efforts of Argent Cares helped needy children in the area, donated books and stuffed animals to low-income students and provided bottled water for delivery to Flint.	
2012	B&P Process Equipment and Systems LLC, Saginaw; Laurence Slovin, president/CEO	Acquired a company to expand the industrial mixer product line. Continued development of expertise in chemicals, pharmaceuticals, minerals, plastics, energetics, consumer products and eco-friendly applications worldwide.	
2007	BB&E Inc., Northville; Aaron Etnyre, president	Obtained two large Dept. of Defense contracts to provide civil and environmental engineering advisory and assistance services, which led to providing support for U.S. Air Force installations around the world. Dramatically increased service globally, including Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.	
2015	Benzinga, Detroit; Jason Raznick, founder/CEO	Added new clients from nearly every major brokerage. Obtained the largest contracts in its history. Relocated to Campus Martius Park in the heart of downtown Detroit. Held the first annual Benzinga Fintech Awards, the premier awards show and gala for the financial technology industry.	
2015	Blackford Capital, Grand Rapids; Martin Stein, founder/managing director	Added several new portfolio companies, including Grand Equipment, Dickinson Press, and Quality Aluminum Products. Announced the launch of Michigan Prosperity Fund II, which will invest in leading manufacturing and industrial companies across Michigan.	
2007	2010	Charter House Innovations, Zeeland; Charles S. Reid, president	Concluded two-years of significant investment in manufacturing space and state-of-the-art equipment. These steps facilitated operational and administrative efficiencies, creating the capacity to meet aggressive growth targets and achieve adaptability in the marketplace.
2015	Civionics Inc., Ann Arbor; Gerry Roston, CEO	Revamped the product line and hardened it for scaling. Closed on its first two customer sales at the end of the year.	
2015	Creative Studio Promotions, Grand Rapids; Menda Wright and Ann Vidro, co-owners	Introduced a new e-store offering, which provides affordable options that are similar to features and functionality in more expensive stores. E-stores allow clients to offer branded merchandise to employees, especially those with multiple locations or a large employee base.	
2014	DASI Solutions, Pontiac; David Darbyshire, co-owner	Launched an apprenticeship program with a \$3 million grant from the Dept. of Labor. Expanded 3-D printing studios in downtown Pontiac. Continued FIRST Robotics and STEM-based educational outreach programs to encourage the pursuit of careers in design engineering.	
2015	Digital Roots, Northville; Jay Wolcott, CEO	Added major clients, including Carhartt, the Consumer Electronics Show, and Volkswagen North America. Launched software that allows brands to view social conversations from specified geolocations. The product is exciting for public safety implementations.	
2009	Duffey Petrosky, Farmington Hills; Mark Petrosky, CEO	An initiative to expand services beyond the traditional advertising agency model is expected to position the company for rapid growth in the next five years. Continued a robust program of community giving, including pro bono marketing and communications services for the Detroit Police Athletic League and Angel's Place.	
2012	Duo-Gard Industries Inc., Canton; David M. Miller, president	Landed significant canopy and shelter projects in public transit arenas across the country. Earned awards for architectural services and outdoor structure innovations. Collaborating in the city of Westland to develop a cultural community garden to introduce, promote, encourage and support art, music, sculpture and culinary efforts.	

 2010	Elite Cleanroom Services, Lapeer; Robert Schodowski, general operating manager	Developed process for recycling production gloves used in automotive paint shops. Continuing to optimize organizational efficiencies, which is improving product quality and generating more sales.
 2010	Emagine Entertainment Inc., Troy; Paul A. Glantz, CEO	Opened new venue at the Emagine Palladium and Ironwood Grill of Birmingham. Continuing development of new venues. Hosted the annual Salvation Army radiothon in Royal Oak.
 2015	Endurance Carbide, Bridgeport; Patrick Curry, president	Started a new marketing campaign, which brought in new customers. Purchased over \$500,000 in new equipment, hired two more employees and added carbide threads to the product line. Working with the local college and university on skilled trades programs.
 2012	FAVI Entertainment, Shelby Township; Jeremy Yakel, CEO	Secured the SmartStick trademark and patents surrounding this technology, which turns HDTVs into smart TVs. Primarily a consumer-driven business, enterprise business is growing substantially for specific SmartStick applications. Won several awards, including an Edison Award for the SmartStick invention.
 2009	Federated Logistics Inc., Wayne; Robert Wierzbicki, president/CEO	Increasing the type of transportation services offered, including flatbed and specialized delivery, and expanded presence in other states. Donated trucking of water to city of Flint and scholarship funds at various schools.
 2009	Forensic Fluids Laboratories Inc., Kalamazoo; Bridget Lorenz Lemberg, lab director/CEO	Invested \$2 million in equipment and expanded client base in Florida, Massachusetts, Texas, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina and California. Now offering new employee health and wellness benefits such as gym memberships and a new 401(k) program.
 2015	Genius Phone Repair, Grand Rapids; Garry VonMyhr, president/CEO	Opened six new locations and a second warehouse. Striving to be involved in the communities where stores are located, donated funds and devices to schools, offered free repairs to children with disabilities and cancer survivors and sponsored community events.
 2015	Innovative Learning Group Inc., Troy; Lisa Toenniges, owner/CEO	Gained new clients in health care, travel and recreation, banking and automotive. Moved into a 10,100-square-foot corporate headquarters in Troy, which was completely renovated from a light industrial building and more than doubles the previous space.
 2010	Integrated Nonclinical Development Solutions Inc., Ann Arbor; James Herman, partner/president	New software tools released for pharmaceutical development. Filed international patents for novel pharmaceuticals. Expanded market territory and gained new clients.
 2010	Lansing Urgent Care, Lansing; Dr. Terry Matthews and Catherine Matthews, co-owners	Grew from a single site to six locations, with a recent ground breaking for a new 11,000-square-foot facility. Converted one location to provide 24/7 services to help patients avoid the ER for non-emergent conditions.
 2014	Leaps and Bounds Therapy Services, Brighton; Alison Barnett, president	Continued to expand and grow overall. Added an applied behavior analysis program and doubled the size of the Howell clinic. Added directors and office managers at each location to improve the chain of command.
 2014	MCM Staffing LLC, Madison Heights; Courtney Morales Hofmann, owner/president	Expanding geographically and in new sectors such as skilled trades and professional industries, facility services and quality containment. Monthly volunteer initiatives are organized by employees. Especially rewarding was a benefit radiothon, which brought the company together to support children with cancer.
 2013	Micron Manufacturing, Grand Rapids; Mike Preston, president	Earned certification from the Dept. of Labor for a machine apprenticeship program. Implemented Kata teams for problem solving, which has improved morale, culture and engagement companywide.
 2015	Mighty Good Coffee, Ann Arbor; David Myers, chief coffee officer	Opened a third location and continuing to increase wholesale accounts. Expanding the market for Nitro cold brew coffee and began distributing kegged coffee. Supported charitable organizations with brewed coffee, silent auction donations and more.
 2008	Motawi Tileworks, Ann Arbor; Nawal Motawi, owner/president	An aggressive monthly product release schedule spiked sales and web traffic, increasing revenue overall. Successfully implemented open book management, which led employees to exceed profit goals by \$50,000, earning them bonuses for the first time in several years.
 2011	Mutually Human, Grand Rapids; Mark Van Holstyn, president	Added a new office in Columbus, Ohio, to increase collaboration with customers in that market. Grew team size by 60 percent. Continued efforts to promote the involvement of women in technology.
 2009	Niowave Inc., Lansing; Dr. Terry Grimm, senior scientist/president	Became the first U.S. company since 1989 to produce molybdenum-99, the most widely used medical isotope in the world. It has an annual market value of \$200 million to \$300 million in this country alone. Also expanded into the x-ray sterilization and cargo scanning markets.

 2013	NITS Solutions, Novi; Neetu Seth, CEO	Added to client base and expanded new product and service offerings in addition to opening a larger location. Applied for new patents. Continued community efforts, including an internship program for high school students.
 2007	OG Technologies Inc., Ann Arbor; Tzzy-Shuh Chang and Terence Liddy, co-owners	Continued to add new customers, amounting to more than 30 major installations in North America, South America, Europe, India, Japan, China, Korea and Singapore. Received new patents for over 31 patents worldwide.
 2015	Plascon Group, Traverse City; David Peterson, CEO	Launched two products that are making headway in today's market: Saftea® Liner and EasyLine™. Continued strategic partnership with Grand Traverse Industries, which provides employment and training opportunities to persons with disabilities, by providing equipment, training and materials.
 2014	Prism Analytical Technologies Inc., Mt. Pleasant; Lester Keepper, president/CEO	Introduced a new scientific instrument with the potential for worldwide applications. Raised significant capital and filed several new patent applications. Opened a product development center in East Windsor, Connecticut.
 2008	Pro Services Inc., Portage; Michael VandeMaele, owner/CEO	Launched Pro University, which trains production maintenance technicians through hands-on learning, an online curriculum and on-the-job training. This proactive effort addresses the upcoming maintenance shortage by giving talented individuals the skills needed to be a valuable asset to any maintenance team.
 2006  2008	Qualigence International, Livonia; Steve Lowisz, CEO	Celebrated 16 years of growth in staff size and revenue last July. Opened locations in Kalamazoo, Shelby Township and Grand Rapids. Community giving has been a key focus for the past several years, marked by the creation of the Qualigence Cares Foundation, which surpassed its 2015 donation goal of \$100,000.
 2014	Reliable Aftermarket Parts Inc., Williamston; Thomas D. Salisbury, owner/CEO	Expanded internationally and took on two new product lines. Inventory more than doubled in the last year. Started a "Funnels for Farmers" campaign for Future Farmers of America, which received proceeds from the sale of oil funnels and shop rags sold at trade shows and tractor club meetings.
 2008	RTI Laboratories Inc., Livonia; Jerry Singh, founder/president	Purchased key analytical instrumentation and completed a 4,000-square-foot facility expansion. Won several contracts from large environmental engineering firms and a multi-year contract with the U.S. Navy. Diversified into automotive, energy, materials, health care and the federal government.
 2014	Smart Vision Lights, Muskegon; Dave Spaulding, president	Released more than 10 new products in 2015, and more are planned for 2016. A patent application is pending. Increased efficiencies organizationally and in manufacturing, resulting in significant savings. Once again received the highest amount possible through a STEP grant, which is helping to grow international sales.
 2015	Spud Software Inc., Grand Blanc Township; Derek Sommer, owner/CEO	Moved into a 9,000-square-foot building, where employees enjoy healthy, fresh-cooked meals at cost, a game room and soda fountain. Sponsored an event with Animal Planet's Jackson Galaxy as a special guest; proceeds benefited the Lucky Day Animal Rescue.
 2015	Stardust Memorials LLC, Traverse City; Jordan J. Lindberg, founder/president	Added a Simple IRA benefit for full-time employees. Redesigned website's homepage, which led to an increase in sales. Published a new product catalog for 2016. Expansion in engraving machines will increase production of orders at a quicker pace.
 2011	TransPharm Preclinical Solutions, Jackson; Daniel Ross, president/CEO	Expanded facility space by 2,112 square feet and increased clientele by 108 percent. Started the TransPharm/Irish Hills STEM Scholarship, which awards \$1,000 to four graduating seniors. Created a structured summer internship program, which gives students an opportunity to complete a two-week project at the company's facilities.
 2015	Troy Gymnastics, Troy; Toby Buechner, owner	Opened a Ninja Warrior room, a 3,000-square-foot space, which incorporates obstacle courses such as a rock wall, spider climb, monkey bars and rope jungle. It attracted 130 ninjas in the first month! A full-service daycare and preschool opened a year ago.
 2014  2015  2015	Walker-Miller Energy Services, Detroit; Carla Walker-Miller, president/CEO	Entered first collaborative partnership with another energy efficiency vendor as a prime implementation contractor. Continued mentoring Detroit-based minority and female entrepreneurs, career professionals and small businesses to help diversify the profile of success in Michigan's comeback story. A founding contributor to the Michigan Science Center's "Steminista" initiative to cultivate girls' lifelong interest in science, technology, engineering and math.

 Michigan 50 Award

 Innovation of the Year

 Exporter Small Business of the Year

 Small Business Person of the Year

 Main Street USA

 Woman-owned Small Business of the Year

# Michigan entrepreneurs pave the way for progress and prosperity.



Each year we see more entrepreneurs inspiring change and making a positive impact on Michigan's economy and workforce. This year is no exception as we recognize and celebrate nearly 60 businesses at the 12th annual Michigan Celebrates Small Business.

The annual award ceremony honors companies that have made a profound impact on Michigan's economy through innovation and marketplace performance. Hundreds of well qualified nominations were received, making the selection process a difficult one. The honorees represent companies that have moved beyond the startup stage and are steadily moving forward to influence the products and processes within their business sector. These companies are from populated metropolitan areas to small rural towns, and represent more than a dozen diverse business sectors.

Individually each of these companies have demonstrated their own unique success. Together, though, they have significantly contributed to the progress and prosperity of Michigan. In the past four years, combined revenue from these companies increased by 119 percent and job creation increased by 93.6 percent. In 2015, these companies employed the equivalent of 1,336 full-time positions and their combined revenue equaled \$436 million.

Companies with strong business leaders succeed. This year we recognize and celebrate the contributions made by a dedicated group of forward-thinking, business leaders. Whether they're pushing their company and employees to new heights or spending their day off volunteering, they're always striving to make their communities and their state a better place to live and work.

Indeed, these are the entrepreneurs, businesses, and leaders to celebrate! They inspire us today and will be the inspiration for the next generation of Michigan entrepreneurs.

Discover how small businesses are thriving in Michigan by reading the profiles and getting to know the entrepreneurs and businesses that we are proud to call winners. Congratulations to the winners and to their families, colleagues, customers, suppliers, and supporters.



Abcor is a material science company leading the innovation of powder coated wood. The Holland-based enterprise's technology is disrupting the vast mature markets of wet coat paint, laminate and vinyl.

At the root of the original technology used by Abcor are Herman Miller and Akzo Nobel who formed a venture that resulted in the invention of the technology. J.T. Weis, formerly a group president with Berkshire Hathaway, acquired the technology in 2012 and has been accelerating the material science through the innovation development curve.

The company's growth is driven by the high performance wear resistant finish combined with ultimate design flexibility and environmental superiority. Architects, designers and manufacturers of wood products are compelled when they discover the advantages this new technology offers.

"Furniture designers are no longer limited by design constraints of laminate, and when we tell them it is only 1/4 of its carbon footprint, 100 percent recyclable and zero VOC they are ecstatic," says J.T. Weis. "The disruption potential of these vast markets is extremely significant," he continues. "However, a hidden danger exists that we mustn't go too fast as we want to execute with world class quality and delivery."

Abcor deploys a triple bottom line system of people, planet and profit. Regarding people, more than half of the production team are convicted felons; this practice helps move their lives forward as part of a dynamic company. Contributions to the planet comes directly from its green technology and operating a near zero-waste plant. Finally, as profits generate, Abcor gives back to more than 12 separate charitable organizations.



## Abcor Industries Holland

J.T. Weis, CEO

Founded in 2006; current leadership since 2012

Primary business: low conduction material powder coating

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 32 in 2015; 40 expected in 2016

[www.abcorindustries.com](http://www.abcorindustries.com)



Life scientists and clinicians are drowning in genetic data. Bioinformatics is the science developed to help researchers and clinicians cope with this data deluge. Already estimated at \$3.1 billion globally, the bioinformatics industry is expected to grow to over \$7.5 billion by 2017.

Advaita Bioinformatics has developed a novel analysis approach that helps translate the gigabytes of data produced as a result of genetic sequencing into a better understanding of the underlying biological phenomena. We focus on delivering clearer results and new insights that cannot be achieved with any other commercial analysis

software in an easy to use application designed for biologists and clinicians.

The company's flagship application, iPathwayGuide™, uses a patented approach called Impact Analysis™ that is capable of identifying mechanisms of action and potential drug targets from expression experiments. With over 6,000 registered users, and an average session time of more than 13 minutes, the application is quickly gaining popularity and generating significant sales.

Advaita is in the final stages of development of a new platform called iVariantGuide™ for the analysis of genomic variant data (mutations). This market is significantly larger and is poised for rapid growth in the personalized medicine revolution. This new platform will significantly expand Advaita's customer base and overall capabilities.



## Advaita Bioinformatics, Plymouth

Sorin Draghici, founder and CEO

Founded in 2005; current leadership since 2005

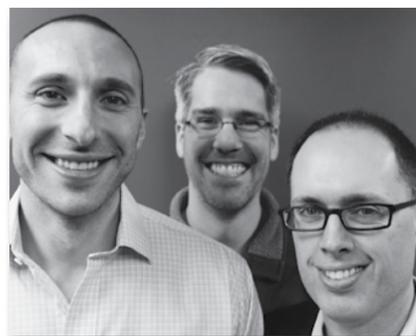
Primary business: bioinformatics

Sites in Michigan: 1

[www.AdvaitaBio.com](http://www.AdvaitaBio.com)



Afia Inc. is a health care consulting firm based in Ann Arbor that works with community health centers, behavioral health organizations, physician groups, primary care, public health and other medical practices to implement IT systems and strategies to create more efficient and effective health care organizations. At Afia, our purpose is to give every person the opportunity to live the healthiest life possible. We believe in this so much that we give 10 percent of our profits away each year to help fund healthcare parity. While our primary focus is on the selection and implementation of IT systems and strategies, we know that no technology ever succeeds on its own. That's why we create solutions to effectively support the workflow of the clinicians, support staff and administrators that make up our clients' organizations.



Afia was started in 2007 by Jeremy Nelson and Chris Akerley, based on work they had done at the Washtenaw Community Health Organization selecting and implementing a multi-county-wide electronic-health-record (HER) system. Jeremy and Chris studied computer engineering at the University of Michigan and use that technical background combined with clinical knowledge and experience to provide a unique approach to EHR selections and implementations

**Afia Inc.**  
Ann Arbor

Jeremy Nelson, CEO; Chris Akerley, president; Matt Hoffman, COO

Founded in 2007;  
current leadership since 2007

Primary business: health care consulting

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
21 in 2015; 25 expected in 2016

www.afiahealth.com



Since its inception in 2010, Avomeen has risen to become a leader in advanced product testing and custom formulation development services nationwide. Its rapid and consistent growth has been driven by the company's ability to deliver accurate and reliable results to even the most complex analytical challenges and its unique service offerings. The company now resides in a 25,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility with segregated lab spaces that include an SEM/EDXA lab, chromatography lab, R&D lab, prototype formulation lab, cGMP pharma lab, and ISO-7 compliant clean rooms.



Since its humble start, the company has grown to 44 employees strong with over 65 percent of its multi-disciplinary technical staff members being Ph.D. chemists or above. Avomeen's full-service testing laboratories' specialties feature investigative analytical testing including unknown material identification, manufacturing problem solving, product reverse engineering, custom commercial product development, cGMP pharmaceutical development, stability testing, product safety analysis, and chemical analysis for litigation support.

Existing clients appreciate Avomeen's ability to accurately and reliably complete complex projects for them on budget and within even their tightest deadlines. Clients also appreciate Avomeen's friendly customer service, ability to access a wealth of knowledge and information through their dedicated team of chemists, and the company's ability to handle R&D projects at all stages from initial concept, to on the shelf product and beyond.

But what truly sets the company apart from its industry competitors and what clients notice immediately during their initial contact with Avomeen is their no-bureaucracy approach to quoting. This is accomplished by connecting potential clients directly with Avomeen's experienced Ph.D. chemists through a complementary initial consultation instead of utilizing a more traditional method of relying on sales technicians. This means that instead of receiving a cookie cutter quote, Avomeen's unique quoting process verifies that the client's true needs are understood and that the customized project proposal designed just for them will completely solve all of their problems or questions.

**Avomeen Analytical Services**  
Ann Arbor

Shri Thanedar, Ph.D., CEO

Founded in 2010;  
current leadership since 2010

Primary business: product testing and development services; R&D lab

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
42 in 2015; 51 expected in 2016

www.avomeen.com



Banza is a food innovation company with the mission to take the foods people love and make them better, by using more nutritious ingredients. Banza's first product is a pasta made from chickpeas—with double the protein, four times the fiber and nearly half the net carbs of traditional pasta.

Brian Rudolph first cooked Banza in his kitchen—hand-cranking his pasta made out of chickpeas. The product was created to meet Brian's own needs. As a fitness junky who loved pasta, he wasn't comfortable carb-loading but didn't enjoy the pasta alternatives. Being in Detroit in 2013, there weren't a lot of affordable healthy food options around, so

he took matters into his own hands.

Banza cultivated a relationship with a small manufacturer in Michigan. A year later, Banza has been the engine of growth, from three employees to 30. Meijer in Michigan was Banza's first retailer to believe in the product, and since launching in store in 2014, the pasta has expanded from two stores to 2,000 nationwide. Banza was also named one of *Time Magazine's* Best Inventions of 2015 and took home the \$500,000 prize at the Accelerate Michigan Innovation Contest.

The Banza team works out of the living room of Brian's New Center apartment. The team can be found at Eastern Market on Saturdays, selling pasta and giving out hugs to regular customers.

**Banza**  
Detroit

Brian Rudolph and Scott Rudolph, co-founders

Founded in 2014;  
current leadership since 2014

Primary business: high-protein pasta made from chickpeas

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.eatbanza.com



When it comes to building custom software solutions, BizStream is one of the best. The Allendale-based software company stands out for its unique culture, "work hard, play hard" attitude, awesome customer support and its passion for giving back to the local community.

Mark Schmidt founded BizStream in 2001. Shortly after, Brian McKeiver joined as co-owner. Together they grew BizStream from a single shared desk with one computer in a friend's office space, to a team comprised of more than 25 talented employees. BizStream now takes advantage of

its newly purchased and renovated headquarters which embodies its unique culture, including a fire pole and onsite gym.

BizStream focuses on building web, online marketing and custom software solutions that are delivered with a sense of smart, geeky fun. The company specializes in ASP, NET, SQL Server, Kentico CMS, Kentico EMS and other content management systems. In short, BizStream builds ridiculously good software and they have fun doing it.

BizStream is passionate in its support for a number of local community efforts, mainly focusing on benefiting youth, education and technology. BizStream Academy, a free coding boot camp that launched in 2012, is a primary example of this community support.



**BizStream**  
Allendale

Mark Schmidt, founder

Founded in 2001;  
current leadership since 2001

Primary business: custom software

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
25 in 2015; 28 expected in 2016

www.bizstream.com



Bromberg is a language-services company that offers top-quality and technologically advanced translation and interpretation in more than 170 languages. It's the first company in Michigan to provide video remote interpreting (VRI) services, which dramatically reduce wait time, saves money and enables immediate language access 24/7. VRI is a secure solution to obtain an interpreter via Internet around the clock for deaf and hard-of-hearing clients, as well as those with limited English proficiency.



Founded in 1999, Bromberg is the main language service provider to major hospitals, courts and businesses nationwide. In 2004, the company was granted a GSA Federal Supply Language Schedule Award, thus adding governmental clients to its growing client base.

We are able to build a multifaceted approach to each client's unique needs thanks to our agility and creativity. We provide interpreters on short notice to fulfill urgent needs, as well as long-term placements for ongoing projects.

Bromberg's office is not only about high-quality services. Our staff is like family, most of whom speak at least two languages. The combination of professional and personal skill sets enables Team Bromberg to enjoy continued success and to provide an enhanced customer experience.

**Bromberg & Associates  
Hamtramck**

Jinny Bromberg, president  
 Founded in 1999;  
 current leadership since 1999  
 Primary business: translation and interpretation  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 25 in 2015; 30 expected in 2016  
[www.brombergtranslations.com](http://www.brombergtranslations.com)



When it comes to flooring, Cash n Carry has it all. Top-notch customer service is the company's main focus. The Traverse City-based company is known for its large inventory and selection as well as its excellent reputation in having knowledgeable sales professionals and in getting the job done right.



Cash n Carry Flooring/Bay View Flooring is a full-service, floor-covering retail store that carries all major brands of flooring along with window treatments. Servicing the entire northern Michigan area, the company provides not only retail but commercial application as well.

Run by Tim and Kathy Hyland, the couple is no stranger to the retail floor-covering business, as previous owners of Floor Covering Brokers in Traverse City for 20 years. The company was sold in 2004 when the couple took a hiatus before returning to the flooring trade and opened Cash n Carry Flooring. In 2015 the company enjoyed a 36 percent growth in revenue. In the same year, Cash n Carry Flooring was honored as one of the Traverse City Chamber of Commerce's top 10 businesses at the organization's annual Small Business Celebration. In addition, the company was runner up for the Gold Standard award, which is presented annually by the World Floor Covering Association.

**Cash n Carry Flooring/  
Bay View Flooring  
Traverse City**

Tim Hyland, owner/co-founder  
 Founded in 2011;  
 current leadership since 2011  
 Primary business: floor covering and window covering retailer  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 19 in 2015; 22 expected in 2016  
[www.cashncarryflooring.com](http://www.cashncarryflooring.com)



For many metastatic and recurrent cancers, procuring repeat tissue biopsy samples is extremely challenging. Liquid biopsy is a less-invasive alternative for capturing rare circulating tumor cells (CTCs) from blood samples, especially in cases where patient monitoring is critical to therapeutic decision making.

A game-changing concept, liquid biopsy has the potential to positively impact the lives of metastatic cancer patients as well as to decrease health care costs while ushering in a new realm of precision medicine.

Formed in 2010 as DeNovo Sciences, the company changed its name to Celsee Diagnostics in October 2015 to better reflect the corporate mission of innovative clinical tools development. Product commercialization of the fully automated, label-free, CTC detection, enrichment and analysis PREP and ANALYZER platforms began in 2015, in addition to a simplified entry level detection and enrichment PREP device. Celsee Diagnostics sells direct in the United States and Canada, and through a distribution network in the rest of the world.

The company is currently working towards ISO 13485 certification and CE-IVD marking with an expected mid-year completion date. Celsee Diagnostics' longer term challenge is completion of the FDA's regulatory process, including clinical trials, to receive routine clinical use approval for the Celsee PREP and ANALYZER platforms.

**Celsee Diagnostics  
Plymouth**

Kalyan Handique, president and CEO  
 Founded in 2010;  
 current leadership since 2011  
 Primary business: medical device  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 10 in 2015; 16 expected in 2016  
[www.celsee.com](http://www.celsee.com)



Since 2005, Clarity Voice has been breaking down the communication barriers created by traditional telephone providers. Using state-of-the art telephony and internet technology, their SaaS systems are the fastest growing cloud-based business communication designed to free people to work the way they want in today's mobile, distributed and always-on work world.

Specializing in servicing the unique needs of the franchise industry, not only does Clarity supply the phone system to the International Franchise Association, their proprietary FranchisePhones® are relied on to support

the fastest growing franchise brands in the business. Their continued success and growth comes from their philosophy of helping businesses succeed through innovative communication solutions, customized systems and providing personalized customer service.

Clarity is focused on the success of small, medium and franchised businesses. As a company, they celebrate every time a business owner experiences the "aha moment." It's that moment when they realize we give them the extra edge over the competition.

Clarity Communication Advisor Inc. dba Clarity Voice is headquartered in Southfield, Michigan, and has been recognized as a top employer by Inc. 5000, 101 Best and Brightest and Crain's Communications.

As a value-driven organization, Clarity is dedicated to doing the right thing by their employees, their customers and the community.



**Clarity Voice  
Southfield**

Gary Goerke, president/owner  
 Founded in 2005;  
 current leadership since 2005  
 Primary business: cloud-based business communication services  
 Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 31 in 2015; 39 expected in 2016  
[www.clarityvoice.com](http://www.clarityvoice.com)



Coastal Automotive is a forward-looking, Tier 1 global automotive company, whose products and solutions increase the safety of interior passenger spaces and reduce passenger compartment sound in motor vehicles. We work with unique products and innovative processes to create value for our customers that generate enhanced safety and comfort for the passengers who use their products.



Founded in 2007, we are a company of engineers and inventors who lead the design and application of passive safety solutions in the auto industry. We are a growing company, with more than 90 employees at our Rochester Hills facilities and an eye on expansion.

In addition to our customer focus on passive safety and sound-reduction technologies, Coastal Automotive is actively involved in the community by engaging in numerous outreach programs that benefit our employees as well as others in the greater Detroit area. Part of our strategy for sustaining our growth is to create a positive impact in the communities where we work and live, by increasing the opportunities and capabilities of residents.

**Coastal Automotive**  
*Rochester Hills*

Clarence Martin, president/owner and Brent Patterson, owner  
 Founded in 2007; current leadership since 2007  
 Primary business: passive safety and acoustic mitigation solutions for automotive use  
 Sites in Michigan: 2  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 93  
 www.coastal-automotive.com



For more than 25 years, Code Blue Corporation has been the industry leading manufacturer of durable emergency communication solutions. As the pioneer in developing and producing vandal-resistant Blue Light Emergency Phones for thousands of education, corporate, hospital, airport and municipal locations around the world, Code Blue's expansion includes the innovation of advanced public address and mass notification systems to provide a complete end-to-end solution.



Founded to address the growing need for sophisticated audio security solutions, Code Blue offers American-made Help Point®, emergency signaling, incident response and systems management products that are innovative, rugged, powerful and easily integrated.

In 2013, Code Blue moved into its current 34,000-square-foot headquarters and production facility in Holland. At this location, the company can better meet its current market demands both nationally and internationally.

Code Blue's evolution continues with the engineering of new software and hardware designed to meet the ever-changing needs of customers who require an advanced level of incident deterrence that establishes a safe environment. No matter where you go, you can feel safe knowing that there is help at the touch of a button®.

**Code Blue Corporation**  
*Holland*

David Cook, CEO  
 Founded in 1989; current leadership since 2012  
 Primary business: emergency communication solutions  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 29 in 2015; 32 expected in 2016  
 www.codeblue.com



Collage.com co-founders and middle-school friends Kevin Borders and Joe Golden were students at the University of Michigan when Kevin ran into a problem: he wanted to create a one-of-a-kind anniversary collage for his girlfriend, Jen, and there wasn't any software up to the task. Undaunted, he teamed up with Joe, and together they developed the software that would become Collage.com.



What began as a literal labor of love (Kevin and Jen are now married) grew into something bigger. The company quickly expanded from \$900,000 in revenue in 2012 to more than \$22 million in 2015—all without taking any outside funding or investment. Today Collage.com employs approximately 40 employees and offers more than 50 products that can be easily customized with the company's tools.

Collage.com has been featured multiple times on Good Morning America, the Today Show, and The View. The company gives back to the community, donating \$10,885 in products to 96 different groups around the country in 2015. Proceeds from the company's October 2015 appearance on The View were donated to the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center.

**Collage.com**  
*Brighton*

Joe Golden and Kevin Borders, co-founder/co-CEO  
 Founded in 2007; current leadership since 2007  
 Primary business: custom photo products  
 Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 32 in 2015; 47 expected in 2016  
 www.collage.com



Credibly is an online lending platform that delivers a broad range of short- and long-term capital to satisfy the entire credit spectrum of small and medium-sized businesses. The company has provided over \$275 million in funding for more than 6,000 businesses in over 300 industries. In the past year, Credibly increased revenue more than 100 percent, was recognized by Crain's and SmartCEO as one of the 50 fastest growing and most innovative companies, and made its second consecutive appearance on the Inc. 500.

In January 2016, Credibly announced a \$70 million credit facility led by SunTrust Bank and backed by AloStar Bank of Commerce (with flexibility up to \$100 million). The credit facility is consistent with Credibly's three-prong financing strategy: on-balance sheet; whole loan sales; and securitization, which more than doubles its on-balance sheet funding capacity, accelerating its ability to provide more U.S.-based small businesses with access to affordable capital.

Headquartered in Troy since 2010, Credibly's core philosophy is that every small business deserves access to right-sized capital. Through its working capital loans and business expansion term loans, it has a suitable funding solution for every business in the United States, regardless of lifecycle stage or credit profile.



**Credibly**  
*Troy*

Glenn Goldman, CEO  
 Founded in 2010; current leadership since 2014  
 Primary business: small business lending platform  
 Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 3  
 www.credibly.com



Founded in Michigan in 2007, Energy Design Service Systems (EDSS) is a national authority on commercial lighting and energy efficiency. Under Dawn and David Ely, EDSS has flourished from a lighting design firm into a company on the forefront of energy efficiency, renewable energy building applications and incentives.



EDSS serves a broad range of industries throughout the United States, including retail stores, academic institutions, arenas, restaurants, hotels, factories, automotive facilities including dealerships, and other large and small businesses alike.

As an Energy Star® partner and U.S. Green Building Council Member, EDSS offers a unique model of energy and cost-savings strategies, leveraging more than a dozen programs in lighting, energy and incentive services to deliver custom solutions that enhance appearance, improve the bottom line and reduce energy consumption. Over the past two years alone, EDSS has generated over \$500 million in tax deductions and rebates for its clients all while making its operations cleaner, more efficient and more profitable.

EDSS prides itself on proving that energy efficiency doesn't have to come at a high cost. Industries across the nation can count on EDSS to work with the integrity and diligence of a world-class business partner.

**Energy Design Service Systems**  
*Whitmore Lake*

David Ely, president/CEO

Founded in 2007;  
current leadership since 2007

Primary business: lighting design and supply, energy management services and incentives

Sites in Michigan: 1

www.edssenergy.com



Founded in 2003, Firebolt is a leader in digital and LED illuminated signage and merchandising displays.



Our success has been based on becoming a partner with our customers to provide innovative, creative merchandising solutions to promote their brand and product awareness. Our customers range from small companies and agencies to the largest, most iconic and recognizable brands in the world. Our LED signs, digital displays and merchandising solutions can be found in over 50 countries.

We pride ourselves in being passionate about innovation and technology, and our team's goal and core values are to provide the very best in engineering, manufacturing, innovation, technology, sales and service at every level to illuminate and ignite brand performance for our customers.

We are headquartered in Wixom, Michigan, in our new 50,000-square-foot manufacturing facility with locations in the United Kingdom and China.

**Firebolt Group Inc.**  
*Wixom*

Philip Ochtman, CEO

Founded in 2003;  
current leadership since 2011

Primary business: signage and merchandising displays

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 2

Full-time equivalent employees:  
44 in 2015; 50 expected in 2016

www.firebolt-group.com



Foodjunky.com is a website that aims to alleviate the headache of ordering food in the office. Originally founded in 2011, foodjunky began as a consumer service based in Chicago. In May of 2013, foodjunky operations moved from the windy city to the booming tech hub that is downtown Detroit to become a member of the Quicken Loans Family of Companies. Foodjunky.com now serves over 250 markets across 29 states, with over a thousand restaurants being added every month, making foodjunky.com the fastest growing food startup in the country.

Travis Johnson is the CEO and co-founder of foodjunky. A self-described foodie, Travis came up with the original idea while completing a business plan assignment during his studies at University of Colorado-Boulder.

In 2011, after spending many years eating the same meal during every meeting at his corporate job, Travis decided to reignite his old business plan. It was finally time to pursue his passions for both tech and food. After officially launching at Built in Chicago in early 2013, Travis and foodjunky excitedly moved to Detroit to join the Quicken Loans Family of Companies.

**foodjunky**  
*Detroit*

Travis Johnson, co-founder and CEO

Founded in 2011

Primary business: food technology

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
8 in 2015; 15 expected in 2016

www.foodjunky.com



The Goldfish experience was born when co-founder Jenny McCuiston discovered a strong demand for quality swim instruction while teaching lessons at Birmingham country clubs in the early 2000s.

Inspired by her experience, in 2004 Jenny and her husband, Chris, began traveling the country to research the learn-to-swim industry.

Their legwork led to the creation of a system that serves as the foundation of Goldfish Swim Schools nationwide.

Each location features colorful murals and faux palm trees to create a tropical decor. To create a shiver-free environment, the water in Goldfish pools is kept at a comfortable 90 degrees while the ambient air is always 92 degrees.

Safety is also a constant theme. In addition to focusing on water-safety skills in each swim lesson, Goldfish offers small class sizes (maximum 4:1 student-to-teacher ratio) and a focus on perpetual learning that allows children to progress naturally.

The McCuistons debuted the concept in 2006 in Birmingham. Inspired by their resounding success—within two years, they were teaching more than 2,000 students a week—they decided to expand by creating a franchise program.

Today, more than 55 schools are open or in development in 17 states, including nine in Michigan.



**Goldfish Swim Schools**  
*Birmingham*

Chris McCuiston, CEO

Founded in 2006;  
current leadership since 2006

Primary business: swim school franchising

Sites in Michigan: 9; sites elsewhere: 22

Full-time equivalent employees:  
14 in 2015; 21 expected in 2016



# HAYHOE CONTRACTING SERVICES

## Hayhoe Contracting Services Holt

Amanda Hayhoe-Kruger, president  
 Founded in 1968;  
 current leadership since 2003  
 Primary business: general construction  
 Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 3  
[www.hayhoe.com](http://www.hayhoe.com)

The customer is always right—even when they're wrong. That's one of the guiding principles of Hayhoe Contracting Services, a third-generation and woman-owned construction company headquartered in Holt, Michigan. That guiding principle helps to ensure all of Hayhoe Contracting Service's staff remembers that the exemplary services they offer to all their customers is the reason the company is still in business almost five decades later.



Founded in 1968 as Hayhoe Grading and Asphalt, Hayhoe Contracting Services began as a small paving company operating in the Lansing, Michigan, area. Over the last five decades, the company has expanded its operations nationwide and is currently a full-service construction company offering a variety of delivery methods including design-build, construction management, general contracting and construction trades.

During its 45 years of providing construction services in the Great Lakes area, Hayhoe Contracting Services has worked with over 12,000 customers and is proud to say that it is still working with customers it met during its first year of business. With offices throughout New York, Ohio and Michigan, Hayhoe Contracting Services continues to build relationships with new customers as well, always striving to achieve quality and excellence in all its jobs.

# inmatech Innovative Material Technologies

## Inmatech Inc. Ann Arbor

Les Alexander, CEO  
 Founded in 2011;  
 current leadership since 2015  
 Primary business: energy storage  
 Sites in Michigan: 2  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 6 in 2015; 16 expected in 2016  
[www.inmatech-inc.com](http://www.inmatech-inc.com)



Inmatech is developing next generation supercapacitor devices that incorporate low-cost, high-performance materials in proprietary designs. Supercapacitors offer a combination of energy and power that complements other electrochemical storage and conversion devices, including batteries and fuel cells. Inmatech's supercapacitors, based on low-cost materials and unique cell design, result in higher energy densities that extend the range and cycle lives of batteries in hybrid energy-storage systems.

Our team—led by CEO Les Alexander, co-founders Professor Levi Thompson, Dr. Saemin Choi, Dr. Paul Rasmussen and Dr. Stefan Heinemann—was formed through the University of Michigan, where we work, teach, invent and collaborate. The university's Office of Technology Transfer helps us leverage the commercial potential of our innovation, by licensing the product, attracting investment and actively moving it from lab to commercial marketplace.

Our devices are inherently safe because we apply aqueous electrolytes (non-flammable). The combination of performance, cost and safety offered by our supercapacitors will enable significant expansion of important electrical energy storage markets, including automotive, smart grid and defense.

Inmatech aims to commercialize its next generation supercapacitors and systems within key markets, through strategic partnerships; these industries are likely to leverage Inmatech's innovative supercapacitors, compared to other commercial devices.



## Image Data Conversion Saline

Joe Mills, managing director  
 Founded in 2010;  
 current leadership since 2010  
 Primary business: digital publishing and conversion services  
 Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 62 in 2015; 64 expected in 2016  
[www.imagedataconversion.weebly.com](http://www.imagedataconversion.weebly.com)

Image Data Conversion (IDC) delivers document conversion services to digitize and facilitate on-line publishing and provide Internet-based content solutions for the educational, publishing, corporate and government sectors. Comprised of four companies, IDC serves over 1,000 customers throughout North America, Europe and Asia.



IDC's NA Publishing subsidiary retains one of the world's largest information archives, comprising six billion pages representing over 18,000 periodicals, cover-to-cover, many of which encompass full-run series from the very first issue. NA Publishing's online collections address unique research needs in the library market. NA Publishing's vast holdings enable libraries to reclaim valuable floor space and reduce costs by providing on-demand content solutions.

IDC's Reveal Digital business delivers an innovative "open access" model unique in the digital publishing industry. Through open access, libraries contribute funds and materials to bring research collections online which, when completed, are offered in an open access model to educational institutions.

IDC's eBeam Film is a leader in high resolution archiving technology. Its R&D labs boast industry-leading capabilities to develop electron beam products, including the engineering of state-of-the-art image capture technology. This innovative technology will enable IDC to access new markets.



Helping clients reach their goals is nothing new to Innereactive Media. Samantha Toth was raised in an optical family, including three optometrists, an eyeglass frame sales manager and an optician. In fact, she too spent eight years working as an ABO certified optician. Her passion for marketing led her to start Innereactive Media in 2003. This firm provides valuable services to the optical industry, small to medium-sized businesses and international brands alike.

Due to their niche expertise and increased demand for their design and marketing services, Innereactive Media continues to grow exponentially. They currently employ marketing and social media professionals, graphic designers, copywriters and web developers. Aside from being experts in their field, all staff members have also been trained in optical to best service their optically niched clients.

When it comes to culture and work ethic, Innereactive Media provides the perfect balance of formality and friendliness. Innereactive Media's leadership challenges each staff member to offer ideas leading to better customer experiences and better client results. They also regularly meet to share ideas for creating an even better place to work. The company culture is centered on the needs of the team, resulting in a happier staff, happier clients and exciting new product launches.



## Innereactive Media Grand Rapids

Samantha Toth, A.B.O.C.,  
 marketing rockstar (owner/founder)  
 Founded in 2003;  
 current leadership since 2003  
 Primary business: marketing strategy, design and website development  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 14 in 2015; 18 expected in 2016  
[www.innereactive.com](http://www.innereactive.com)



IP Consulting Inc. is an information technology solution provider with expertise in cyber security, network infrastructure, unified communications and data center. IP Consulting designs, implements and manages innovative IT solutions that support their customers' business goals.



IP Consulting seeks and employs technologists that specialize in complex and revolutionary solutions. Because their core product is the expertise of their team, they focus on employee satisfaction and retention consistently and purposefully. They demonstrate this dedication by providing their employees with an array of great benefits as well as support for education and certification achievements. These high standards for their team are exemplified by founder Milton Moore, who is one of less than 1,000 in the world to hold a dual Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert in routing/switching and collaboration.

IP Consulting has grown from one employee to 17, with plans to add at least six more to their team in 2016. They have achieved a place on the Inc. 5000 list of Fastest Growing Private Companies in America for 2014, 2015 and soon 2016. IP Consulting is proud to be a Michigan-based business and thankful to be recognized as a Michigan 50 awardee.

**IP Consulting Inc.**  
*Kentwood*

Milton Moore, CEO

Founded in 2006;  
current leadership since 2006

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
17 in 2015; 23 expected in 2016

[www.ipconsultinginc.com](http://www.ipconsultinginc.com)



ITC Incorporated, with its corporate headquarters in Holland, serves a wide variety of customer segments under six unique brands. ITC's customer base ranges from marine and RV OEMs and distributors, to commercial furniture manufacturers, architects, retail display manufacturers and consumers. ITC also has locations in Elkhart, Indiana; Hong Kong; and Guangdong Province, China, in order to provide service close to customers' locations and to have proximity to suppliers and alliance partners.



ITC was founded in 1982 by Richard Camarota with the vision of designing and delivering application-specific products solutions through a combination of talented people and resources located on two continents. This vision has led ITC to develop a wide range of products, including a concentration of LED lighting and electronics products for small and large companies across the world. Today, led by Michael Camarota, ITC continues as a family-owned corporation that is focused on designing, engineering and producing value-oriented innovative products.

**ITC Incorporated**  
*Holland*

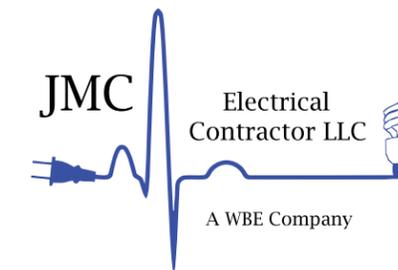
Michael Camarota Esq., president

Founded in 1982;  
current leadership since 2007

Primary business: LED lighting product engineering, development and manufacturing

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 3

[www.itc-us.com](http://www.itc-us.com)



JMC Electrical Contractor LLC (JMC) is a 100 percent certified woman-owned union electrical contracting business. Established in 2010 by Mashell Carissimi, JMC provides quality electrical installations and renovations to the state of Michigan. JMC specializes in commercial, medical, casino, institution and industrial electrical installations. In 2015, JMC opened a low-voltage division, JMC Technology Group, to provide sound, communication, networking, audio/visual, and security installations and services. JMC takes pride in its quality workmanship, cost effectiveness and ability to

bring the job in on time and at or under budget.

JMC's union electricians are experienced, reliable and well-trained. They have the skills, experience, and knowledge needed to get the project done on time and in the most cost-efficient manner. At JMC, safety is a priority and they are well versed and up to date on all national, state and local electrical codes.

**JMC Electrical Contractor LLC**  
*Clinton Township*

Mashell Carissimi, owner, founder and CEO

Founded in 2010;  
current leadership since 2010

Primary business: electrical installations and service

Sites in Michigan: 2

Full-time equivalent employees:  
36 in 2015; 40 expected in 2016

[www.jmcelectricalllc.com](http://www.jmcelectricalllc.com)



Johnstone Supply—The Sheehan Group makes it easier for HVACR contractors to do business, with a selection of programs, products and services serving the heating and cooling industry.

From a single location founded in downtown Detroit in 1997, the company has grown to 13 branches with a staff of nearly 90 employees. The company is a one-stop shop for contractors, offering the largest inventory of heating and cooling equipment, parts and supplies in the industry. Part of a nationwide cooperative that includes 400 independently owned locations, The Sheehan Group

is equipped to be a solutions provider, as well, with onsite warehousing, a proprietary database containing millions of cross references that allows access to repair and replacement parts for even obsolete items, and a number of programs that create profit-building efficiency and productivity for contractors.

The Sheehan Group is a long-time supporter of industry education such as trade schools, including sitting on boards of directors and contributing financially. They are also generous donors of both time and money to local initiatives such as Forgotten Harvest & Gleaners Food Bank and the Oakland Hills Scholarship Fund.



**Johnstone Supply—The Sheehan Group**  
*Orion*

Jeffrey Sheehan, owner

Founded in 1997;  
current leadership since 1997

Primary business: HVAC and wholesaler

Sites in Michigan: 11; sites elsewhere: 2

Full-time equivalent employees:  
87 in 2015; 96 expected in 2016

[www.johnstonesupply.com](http://www.johnstonesupply.com)



The way we eat is changing. We want to know where our food comes from and how it was produced. Foodservice buyers and suppliers are reinventing the way they operate to meet rapidly growing consumer demand for healthier, sustainable food.

Local Orbit is the supply-chain platform for a new, connected food economy.

Local Orbit enables foodservice operators to efficiently purchase from local farmers and food producers, while maintaining complete supply chain transparency—and meeting customer demand for local and sustainable food.

For high-volume purchasers, Local Orbit consolidates orders and invoices from multiple suppliers, while providing supply-chain insight and product traceability. The platform features robust analysis, demand planning and storytelling tools.

For suppliers, Local Orbit provides online ordering, inventory management, financial management, logistics, marketing and business analytics.

More than 8,000 buyers, producers and distributors connect and transact on the platform through local marketplaces and custom supplier/management portals.

By enabling efficient, decentralized supply chains, Local Orbit saves money for foodservice buyers and enables them to meet customer demand for local and sustainably sourced food, while increasing market share for small and mid-size food suppliers.



**Local Orbit**  
*Ann Arbor*

Erika Block, founder and CEO

Founded in 2010

Primary business: supply chain management services for local and sustainable food businesses

Sites in Michigan: 1

[www.localorbit.com](http://www.localorbit.com)



McCardel Restoration is a leader in property disaster recovery services in mid-Michigan. Whether it's a commercial property or a residence, our mission is "handle the disaster, and everything after" when a catastrophe strikes.

We provide 24 hours a day, 365 days a year emergency services restoring fire, water, mold and storm damage of every kind and on any scale. In addition, we handle the cleaning and deodorization of contents—either in-place or we can pack them out and process them at our facility. To complete the job, our in-house construction team repairs property to pre-loss condition.

Our staff draws on a vast pool of industry knowledge that is reinforced with certifications and continued education. We employ highly qualified people and offer complete general contracting, project management and consulting services. We are passionate about creating a workplace made up of great people in a fast-paced environment where professional and personal growth are expected.

Founded in 2002 by owner/operator Kelli McCardel, McCardel Restoration moved into a dynamic 15,000-square-foot facility in 2011 to better serve the property owners of mid-Michigan. We strive to be a great employer in our community by sponsoring and volunteering for a variety of local charities and hosting many employee appreciation events each year.



**McCardel Restoration**  
*East Lansing*

Kelli McCardel, owner and operator

Founded in 2002;  
current leadership since 2002

Primary business: property restoration and construction

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
22 in 2015; 27 expected in 2016

[www.mccardelrestoration.com](http://www.mccardelrestoration.com)



Millendo Therapeutics is a biotechnology company focused on developing a portfolio of disease-modifying treatments for endocrine disorders caused by hormone dysregulation. Our product candidates seek to improve the quality of life for patients with orphan and specialty diseases for which there are limited or no approved treatment options. Our clinical programs target the following diseases:

- Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS): the most common endocrine disease in women
- Adrenocortical carcinoma (ACC): a rare endocrine malignancy of the adrenal cortex

- Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH): a recessive genetic defect of cortisol synthesis
- Endogenous Cushing's Syndrome (CS): a condition resulting from chronic cortisol excess

Millendo was founded in 2012 as a spin-out of the University of Michigan. The company has raised over \$77 million in private financing from leading venture capital firms, including a Series B financing in December 2015 which is the largest ever in the state of Michigan. The funding enables the advancement of each of the company's clinical trials through Phase 2 clinical studies. Millendo's team has extensive experience in drug development, particularly in endocrine diseases, and is well suited to develop these important new treatments to advance them to the market.

**Millendo Therapeutics**  
*Ann Arbor*

Julia C. Owens, president and CEO

Founded in 2012;  
current leadership since 2012

Primary business: drug development

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
9 in 2015; 18 expected in 2016

[www.millendo.com](http://www.millendo.com)



MMI Engineered Solutions Inc. (MMI) is a custom injection-molding company, headquartered in Saline. MMI has full-service design, engineering and analysis in-house as well as full service tool design and construction in-house. MMI has two primary business segments: injection molded components and injection molded returnable packaging. MMI services the automotive, heavy truck and industrial automation industries.

MMI also has a full service injection molding/assembly facility in Monterrey, Mexico, and an engineering/sales office in Troy, Michigan. We have molding presses ranging from 88 tons up to 2,250 tons. MMI is currently expanding our manufacturing and tooling operations in Saline as well as adding capacity/capabilities in Monterrey. MMI is TS-16949 and ISO 9001 certified.

Our corporate vision is to strive for continuous improvement and excellence as a team. We recognize our employees as our most important asset. We will continue to invest into our employees to grow them both personally and professionally. MMI will provide a quality product, on-time and at a competitive price for our chosen customers.



**MMI Engineered Solutions Inc.**  
*Saline*

Doug Callahan, president and CEO

Founded in 1983;  
current leadership since 2012

Primary business: custom injection molding

Sites in Michigan: 2; sites elsewhere: 2

Full-time equivalent employees:  
94 in 2015; 115 in 2016

[www.mmi-es.com](http://www.mmi-es.com)



Modustri provides comprehensive measurement and data collection software solutions designed for the heavy equipment, transportation and infrastructure industries. The company's aim is to streamline the wear management and inspection process while improving safety and cost efficiencies.



Modustri was founded in 2013 with the realization of an inefficient inspection process for heavy equipment, taking what was once a pen and paper process of field measurements and digitizing them. By providing a way to measure and quickly predict when a major part or component needs maintenance, customers save hours and dollars by proactively managing wear parts, optimizing fleets to more effectively achieve new levels of productivity and profitability.

During the past twelve months, the company has seen triple-digit growth and more than quadrupled its staff in conjunction with a new business relationship with Caterpillar, and sees no slowing down in 2016.

In 2016, new proprietary technology has attracted interest from some of the largest retail companies in the world. Realizing the opportunity in the data collection and analytics market, Modustri is quickly evolving into the revolutionary "Internet of Things" space.

**Modustri**  
*Grand Rapids*

Brian Steketee, CEO  
 Founded 2013;  
 current leadership since 2013  
 Primary business: innovative technology  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 www.modustri.com



Mount Bohemia, chosen as one of the top five most unique ski areas in North America by Zrankings, is located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Mount Bohemia is radically different from any ski area built in the United States. Bohemia was designed as a very narrowly focused brand that would cater to expert skiers looking for adventure. Bohemia has no beginner terrain, never grooms any of its runs and has skis on only natural snow.

Bohemia is about adventure, escape and wilderness. Mount Bohemia offers 600 acres of inbounds back-country terrain. *Powder Magazine* ranked it the No. 1 ski area east of the Rockies (Oct. 2013). Bohemia is the biggest mountain in the Midwest and offers the highest vertical drop and the most snow with almost 300 inches of snow per year.

Lonie Glieberman, president of Mount Bohemia, designed the original business plan, but in the early years Bohemia struggled—by year three there were only 75 season pass holders. Stacy Kremer, the current media relations director, came up with the idea of a \$99 one day season pass sale. Lonie originally resisted, but he eventually allowed Stacy to proceed with her radical idea. The pass sale was a success and today Bohemia has over 5,600 season pass holders.

This year Bohemia added Voodoo Mountain, the first snowcat ski operation east of the Rockies. Seventeen skiers ride the Voodoo snowcat to a remote wilderness setting for a great day of powder skiing. When completed, it will feature over 1,000 acres of skiable terrain on over five peaks overlooking Lake Superior.

**Mount Bohemia**  
*Lac La Belle*

Lonie Glieberman, president  
 Founded in 2000  
 Primary business: recreational ski area for expert skiers  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 12 in 2015; 15 expected in 2016  
 www.mtbohemia.com



Based in Oak Park, Mopec designs, manufactures and distributes high-quality, custom capital equipment, laboratory products and other consumable products to the pathology, histology, necropsy, autopsy and mortuary industries.



Founded in 1992, Mopec's highly engineered solutions are among the very best as demonstrated by the vast number of installations in leading health care institutions and facilities. Mopec is committed to designing and manufacturing innovative and ergonomic work stations to enhance a facility's safety, flexibility and productivity by applying technical prowess that stems from true American craftsmanship and high-touch service.

Mopec is the market leader in the United States for its diversified line of capital equipment. The company also serves customers worldwide, including North America, South America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

**Mopec**  
*Oak Park*

Jane VanDusen, CEO  
 Founded in 1992;  
 current leadership since 2015  
 Primary business: pathology and mortuary equipment  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 71 in 2015; 75 expected in 2016  
 www.mopec.com



Erik Kiilunen, CEO of Neuvokas Corporation, has been manufacturing products for 27 years, with four acquisitions, five start-ups and one exit to his credit. Throughout his 27-plus-year career, Kiilunen has been involved in manufacturing and product development at all levels—from shop floor activities in production, maintenance, shipping domestic and international, and ISO quality systems to formulating products, lab testing products and designing manufacturing systems for these products. He has been engaged in product testing and development for both organic and inorganic formulation driven products throughout his career.

As an executive in the tool and die industry, he oversaw two acquisitions, a welding facility and a flux-cored wire manufacturer. He was instrumental in consolidating these operations and developing additional products and sales to improve the company's market position.

Today, in addition to his duties as CEO of Neuvokas Corporation, a start-up focused on high-speed processing of fiber-reinforced polymer rebar, he oversees three companies under his holding company, Kiilunen Manufacturing Group.

Kiilunen attended Michigan Technological University in the metallurgical engineering program.

Kiilunen is married to Janine, his wife of 25 years. He is an active outdoorsman who enjoys building, fishing, hunting, running, skiing and anything outdoor-related.



**Neuvokas Corporation**  
*Ahmeek*

Erik Kiilunen, CEO  
 Founded in 2013;  
 current leadership since 2013  
 Primary business: fiber-reinforced polymer rebar  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees:  
 10 in 2015; 35 expected in 2016  
 www.neuvokascorp.com



In the water management industry, Parjana® Distribution is leading the way by offering a green solution that is changing the way the world views stormwater management. The Michigan-based water innovation company sets itself apart from others for its unique technology that allows water to travel and filter naturally.



Parjana® Distribution was started in 2012 by Andrew Niemczyk and Gregory McPartlin to offer a green stormwater management solution to the public. For the past two years, the company has expanded across multiple markets, including a partnership in the United Kingdom in 2013 and an expansion in Europe through Switzerland in 2013. Today, Parjana® remains committed to continuing to grow into new markets.

The vision of the company is to create a more eco-friendly and sustainable environment through the Energy-passive Groundwater Recharge Product (EGRP®). Through the use of the EGRP®, Parjana® Distribution hopes to show the world that stormwater management can be green and affordable at the same time.

**Parjana® Distribution**  
*Detroit*

Gregory McPartlin, co-founder and CEO  
 Founded in 2012; current leadership since 2012  
 Primary business: stormwater management  
 Sites in Michigan: 4; sites elsewhere: 3  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 15  
[www.parjanadistribution.com](http://www.parjanadistribution.com)



Established in 1927 in the city of Detroit's east side, where it still stands, Public Lumber & Millwork (PLM) has grown from a simple lumberyard to a full-service millwork facility specializing in the stocking and manufacturing of custom hardwood mouldings. With over 3,000 styles in our moulding profile library, we do all the templating and grinding of knife steel in-house, thereby controlling every aspect of production.



PLM also stocks one of the largest varieties of domestic and exotic dimensional hardwood lumber in all of Michigan, including several species of hardwood and marine-grade plywood, hardwood decking, clear softwoods, marine hardwoods and hardwood veneer.

PLM offers the following custom products on a special-order basis: interior and exterior entry doors, stair parts and related components, butcher block countertops and tabletops, wood columns, architectural carvings and embossed moulding, non-stock exotic veneer, custom hardware and specialty flooring up to 9 inches. In addition, PLM provides these on-site services: edge glue laminations, surface sanding and planing, and custom cutting and resawing.

PLM is proud to be a certified Detroit-based and Woman-owned Business Enterprise, and one of two winners of the 2015 NEIdeas \$100k Challenge sponsored by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan.

**Public Lumber & Millwork**  
*Detroit*

Fadiya Sarafa, owner and president  
 Founded in 1927; current leadership since 2007  
 Primary business: retail lumber sales and custom millwork manufacturing  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
[www.publiclumber.com](http://www.publiclumber.com)



RECRUITMENT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS, LLC



Recruitment Management Consultants (RMC) is a Michigan-based, full-service information technology (IT) consulting and placement agency. The company offers highly experienced recruiting and account management professionals with the ability to service the diverse needs of Michigan companies seeking to employ top technical talent within the region.

Founded in 2010, one of RMC's core values is to build relationships that last a lifetime, which is continually demonstrated by its employees both internally and externally. RMC, with offices in East Lansing and Novi, is active in the local communities in which they serve. They support multiple organizations including Capital Area IT Council (CAITC), Michigan Technology Network (MITN), Michigan Council for Women in Technology (MCWT), Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) and many technology user group meetups in both the greater Lansing and metro Detroit areas.

In 2015, RMC achieved a ranking of 797 on the Inc. 5000 list and was number 12 for top Michigan companies. Receiving the 2016 Michigan 50 Companies to Watch Award signifies RMC's continued growth into the future.

**Recruitment Management Consultants**  
*East Lansing*

Jim Beiermeister, co-owner and managing partner, and Jamie Lytle, co-owner and managing partner  
 Founded in 2010; current leadership since 2010  
 Primary business: information technology consulting and placement  
 Sites in Michigan: 2  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 26 in 2015; 33 expected in 2016  
[www.rmcagency.com](http://www.rmcagency.com)



Red Level helps companies transform IT into a powerful competitive advantage. We provide the game-changing technologies that companies need to increase efficiency, improve security and drive revenue—technologies that translate into business success.

For more than a decade, companies have turned to Red Level for enterprise-grade technology products and services—and Red Level has delivered world-class strategic and tactical consulting services to go along with them. We provide unbeaten technical expertise and an unmatched commitment to outstanding customer service. Red Level has the analytical skills and industry insights necessary to make technology perform for our clients—and deliver outstanding business results.

Red Level clients trust us to deliver business technology consulting, customizable cloud solutions and managed IT services that maximize the value of IT investments while optimizing performance, security and reliability. We provide comprehensive technology solutions that let companies focus on what they do best: their products, their customers and building their business.

Red Level's continuous growth and outstanding record of industry awards and accolades attest to our ability to help companies achieve IT excellence. The satisfaction of our clients and their continuing business success prove it.



**Red Level**  
*Novi*

David King, president/CEO  
 Founded in 2004; current leadership since 2004  
 Primary business: information technology  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 29 in 2015; 34 expected in 2016  
[www.redlevelnetworks.com](http://www.redlevelnetworks.com)



Have you ever thought, “There has got to be a better way to do this?” Founded in 1996, RightAnswer.com Inc. has established itself as an industry leader with its software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions by providing those better ways to solve information and document requirements for the environmental, health, and safety (EHS) market.



RightAnswer.com has developed two distinct product lines: Document Solutions and Knowledge Solutions. Designed to meet EHS and other regulatory-compliance needs, Document Solutions is a structured document system used for complete end-to-end management of commercial industrial labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS). Knowledge Solutions provides single-search access to chemical and regulatory information from more than 100 proprietary and EHS market-exclusive data sources, each indexed and mastered, allowing quick and accurate access to the data subscribers need.

For RightAnswer.com, one of their strengths is a workplace culture that emphasizes honesty and integrity in all things, resulting in a strong bond between the organization, employees, customers, suppliers and investors. The promotion of a flexible work environment to stimulate and support their team of highly skilled, creative and solution-driven employees is another of their strengths. In combination, these give RightAnswer.com the edge to continually innovate better solutions for their customers’ needs.

**RightAnswer.com Inc.**  
*Midland*

Glenn Hallett, president and CIO

Founded in 1996;  
current leadership since 1996

Primary business: SaaS

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 4

Full-time equivalent employees:  
8 in 2015; 9 expected in 2016

www.rightanswer.com



Service First Logistics Inc. (SFL) was founded in 2011 by Royce Neubauer. He began operations out of his home with the mission of creating a company where people, service and philanthropy are the driving force of corporate culture. In just five years, SFL has grown into a major player in the freight brokerage industry, with over 600 customers, offices in Auburn Hills, Michigan, and Cincinnati, Ohio, and growth projections of over 100 employees by year-end.

As a freight brokerage firm, SFL partners nationally with shippers, manufacturers, growers, retailers, distributors and small fleet trucking companies to purchase, manage and coordinate freight shipments throughout the contiguous United States and parts of Canada. SFL acts as an extension of the logistics teams of its customer partners and an extension of the sales team of its carrier partners.

SFL’s culture is fast-paced, team-oriented and exciting. Every day presents new opportunities for team members to grow and flourish in a young, growing environment.

SFL also has a philanthropic mindset. Team members volunteer and participate in many corporate-sponsored events throughout the year, some of which include: The Cincinnati Mini Heart marathon, the Movember Foundation, and Feeding the Future of America’s Blessings in a Backpack and its annual Coats for Kids drive, for which SFL has donated 900 brand new coats over the past five years. SFL’s mission is to implement and sustain unmatched service standards for customers, carriers, employees and community through a team-oriented, results-driven partnership.

**Service First Logistics Inc.**  
*Auburn Hills*

Royce Neubauer, founder, president and CEO

Founded in 2011;  
current leadership since 2011

Primary business: freight brokerage firm

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
55 in 2015; 100 expected in 2016

www.sflcompanies.com



RightBrain Networks makes the benefits of running a business in the public cloud a reality. The Ann Arbor-based software development and cloud consulting firm is passionate about solving complex technical problems and helping companies innovate in the cloud.



Founded in 2009, RightBrain has operated as a dev ops shop from day one. This, along with deep cloud expertise, enables the team of software engineers to rapidly build and deploy cloud-based applications that deliver business results. RightBrain was among the first firms certified as an Amazon Web Services Advanced Consulting Partner and one of only seven AWS Managed Service Partners worldwide. The firm is also a Microsoft Partner Silver Cloud Platform.

RightBrain understands the challenges of moving to the cloud, not the least of which is choosing a cloud services provider. The team brings cloud initiatives from whiteboard to reality, deploying the right tools and resources to take advantage of the cloud’s cost efficiencies, flexibility and scalability. Once there, RightBrain works with companies to transfer knowledge and help them continually advance and innovate in the cloud.

**RightBrain Networks**  
*Ann Arbor*

Jamie Begin, founder and CTO

Founded in 2009;  
current leadership since 2009

Primary business: cloud consulting services

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
23 in 2015; 30 expected in 2016

www.rightbrainnetworks.com



When it comes to creating the very best customer experience, few compare to the Service Professor. Their commitment to providing exemplary service is both the foundation of their business model, as well as the driving force behind everything they do.

With history dating back nearly 40 years, the Service Professor has grown from a small electrical company based in Greenville to one of the largest home service repair companies in West Michigan. In 2013 the company moved operations to its present location near the Gerald R. Ford International Airport; they now serve more than 15,000 residential and commercial customers in seven counties.

A group of skilled professionals, the Service Professor staff applies their knowledge, training and expertise to ensure each customer transaction is carried out with integrity. Leadership and staff alike stand behind the work they do, ever mindful of the honest value received by their customers.

The Service Professor undertakes several philanthropic endeavors each year, investing both human and financial resources in a variety of organizations and initiatives, such as the Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital, Cure SMA and Adopt-A-Family.



**Service Professor**  
*Grand Rapids*

Brad Krause, president

Founded in 1978;  
current leadership since 2003

Primary business: heating, cooling, electrical and plumbing

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
40 in 2016; 52 expected in 2017

www.4professor.com



Started in 2010, Smart Bottoms has become a leader in the natural parenting movement. Our organic cloth diapers and accessories are changing the way people choose to diaper their babies.

Smart Bottoms' modern cloth diapers are easy to wash, are trim and absorbent, and do not contain the chemicals found in most disposable diapers. Parents who choose to diaper using Smart Bottoms will also save thousands of dollars and one ton of disposable diaper waste every year.



Quality and integrity are reflected in every one of Smart Bottoms' products, which are proudly manufactured in the United States. With retailers in over 27 countries, Smart Bottoms is helping to reduce the carbon footprint of families around the world.

Through their international and domestic giving program, Smart Bottoms provides reusable diapers to orphanages in third world countries and domestically supports Giving Diapers, Giving Hope, a non-profit that provides reusable diapers to low-income families. Even with an annual growth of nearly 500 percent, Smart Bottoms has been able to do big things with its small staff. Their four full-time employees and handful of part-time employees manage all day-to-day operations out of their Ada, Michigan office. Between their two cut and sew contractors, Smart Bottoms keeps over 60 people employed full-time sewing their products.

**Smart Bottoms**  
*Ada*

Christina Malone, CEO

Founded in 2010;  
current leadership since 2010

Primary business: baby products

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
6 in 2015; 8 expected in 2016

[www.smartbottoms.com](http://www.smartbottoms.com)



Stewart Industries provides value added assembly and quality inspection services that are fully integrated with our customer's processes to ensure maximum efficiency. As an innovative minority business with assembly as our core competency, we offer specific value added inspection services and assemblies delivered just-in-time.

We don't make one type of widget, but provide over 80 diverse types of products to our assembly customers. Hence, our assembly experience ranges from small components to large assemblies and everything in between. Working with Stewart Industries, our customers can expect defect-free performance, cost-competitive pricing and efficiency. By sending us their sub-assembly projects, we support our customers by reducing inventory and labor costs while improving efficiency overall.

Our goal is to continue our progressive journey of being a top-tier service provider this year and long into the future. Capitalizing on our experience, talented teams and growing product capability, Stewart Industries looks forward to offering manufacturers support options ranging from product design prototyping, trial support, production-part approval and ultimately full-production processing. With support from our sister services in Stewart Metrology (new in 2016), we now make our unique one-stop service offerings a reality.



**Stewart Industries**  
*Battle Creek*

Erick Stewart, president

Founded in 2000;  
current leadership since 2000

Primary business: value added  
assembly and quality inspection  
services

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
85 in 2015; 91 expected in 2016

[www.stewartindustriesusa.com](http://www.stewartindustriesusa.com)



Located in the coastal city of Frankfort, in the northwest corner of Michigan's lower peninsula, Stormcloud Brewing Company opened its doors in June 2013.

With a focus on Belgian-style brewing, Stormcloud offers 16 taps in its downtown pub with



a selection of traditional and non-traditional Belgian beers, in addition to locally-produced cider, mead and wine. Co-owner and head brewer Brian Confer home brewed for 10+ years prior to Stormcloud. While home brewing, Brian perfected recipes for Stormcloud's flagship beers.

But award-winning, handcrafted beer isn't the only reason people visit Stormcloud. The establishment was voted the No. 1 restaurant in Frankfort by TripAdvisor travelers. With a full menu featuring flatbread pizzas, sandwiches, salads, soups, appetizers and specialty popcorn, many menu items are crafted with locally grown or raised ingredients.

Giving back to the community Stormcloud calls home is important to owners Rick Schmitt and Brian Confer. After completing its first year of operation, the brewery started a program entitled Stormcloud Builds Community. Every month during the summer and quarterly thereafter, Stormcloud selects one organization making a difference in northern Michigan, to share its message and raise funding for its efforts. To date, Stormcloud has helped support 11 nonprofit organizations.

**Stormcloud**  
**Brewing Company**  
*Frankfort*

Rick Schmitt and Brian Confer,  
co-owners and founders

Founded in 2013;  
current leadership since 2013

Primary business: brewery

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
19 in 2015; 22 expected in 2016

[www.stormcloudbrewing.com](http://www.stormcloudbrewing.com)



A passion for connecting hardware products to software applications led Jake Sigal and Massimo Baldini to create Tome Inc. in 2014. Founded in metro Detroit, Tome works with elite partners to develop connectivity solutions that keep people mobile and active. Tome engineers tackle the most-interesting problems in the exploding world of tech. The resulting products create value in a focused niche within the larger "Internet of Things" movement. Tome's customers include Humanscale and Ford Motor Co. Sigal and Baldini sold their previous start-up, Livio,

to Ford in 2013. For more information check out [www.tomesoftware.com](http://www.tomesoftware.com) or on Twitter @TomeOwl



**Tome**  
*Royal Oak*

Jake Sigal and Massimo Baldini,  
co-founders

Founded in 2014;  
current leadership since 2014

Primary business: software for the  
"Internet of Things"

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
12 in 2015; 15 expected in 2016

[www.tomesoftware.com](http://www.tomesoftware.com)



Truscott Rossman was formed in Lansing in January 2011 when Michigan's leading public relations practitioners joined forces. Since then, the firm has expanded statewide to include offices in Detroit and Grand Rapids. In the past three years, Truscott Rossman has grown from 19 employees in 2013, to 30 people statewide, including six full-time employees in Detroit.



The firm has fueled its growth by applying a consistent approach for each of our clients: we help organizations develop the right messages and share them with the right audiences at exactly the right time, using innovative and effective communications strategies and tactics.

Our founders, Kelly Rossman-McKinney and John Truscott, have more than 50 years of communications strategy and media relations experience between them. They've been ranked Michigan's No. 1 and No. 2 most effective public relations professionals in every MIRS/EPIC-MRA survey of capitol insiders that has been conducted—in 2004, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015.

**Truscott Rossman**  
*Lansing*

Kelly Rossman-McKinney, CEO, and John Truscott, president  
 Founded in 2011; current leadership since 2011  
 Primary business: public relations  
 Sites in Michigan: 3  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 30 in 2015; 34 expected in 2016  
[www.truscottrossman.com](http://www.truscottrossman.com)



Verdeterre Contracting moves earth every day. We are a family-owned construction firm established in 1980 as a site utility company. Since our founding, the size and scope of our projects have expanded significantly, in tandem with our growth.



Today, Verdeterre Contracting is a full-service site development company that provides site demolition, utility installation, grading and related services to public and private clients. Our work includes trenchless pipe installation, water main and sanitary sewer installation, topsoil screening and rough grading.

Verdeterre's clients include Northville, Canton, Monroe and Pittsfield townships, Oakland and Washtenaw counties, Bouma Construction Company and National Heritage Academies. We work with a range of development companies, senior living facilities, schools, government entities and others to deliver quality services at a competitive value. Our core mission focuses on customer service, innovation and integrity.

Verdeterre has grown significantly over the last several years, thanks in part to its leadership's ability to look for construction trends early and establish connections as soon as possible. In the coming year, we will double the size of our current office space, increase office staff and add an additional field team to the lineup.

**Verdeterre Contracting Inc.**  
*Canton*

Christopher Brown, president/CEO  
 Founded in 1980; current leadership since 2004  
 Primary business: construction-site development  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 23 in 2015; 26 expected in 2016  
[www.verdeterre.net](http://www.verdeterre.net)



Web Ascender designs Internet marketing solutions, engaging websites and mobile applications for businesses of all sizes around the world, from entrepreneurial start-ups to Fortune 500 companies.



The company was started in 2005 by Ryan Doom and Kevin Southworth, two computer science graduates from Michigan State

University. Steady and continuous growth has allowed them to expand to 12 full-time employees, in addition to four rotating internship positions for local students. Their philosophy is simple: hire intelligent people that are passionate about their work and the success of their customers.

Over the last 10 years, Web Ascender has worked with over 400 companies in more than 25 states, while providing services to organizations on six continents. The growth of the company has been organic, with the majority of new business coming from referrals or from their website, where companies reach out to them from around the world for their expertise.

In 2015 the company moved to a 5,000+-square-foot location to help accommodate their future growth. It's expected that by mid-2016, Web Ascender will add two to three new employees to their staff and continue to grow their business in Okemos.

**Web Ascender**  
*Okemos*

Ryan Doom and Kevin Southworth, owners and co-founders  
 Founded in 2005; current leadership since 2005  
 Primary business: website design, web and mobile application development, and Internet marketing  
 Sites in Michigan: 1  
 Full-time equivalent employees: 12 in 2015; 17 expected in 2016  
[www.webascender.com](http://www.webascender.com)



Our mission at ZeroBase Energy LLC is to make clean energy and its benefits accessible to everyone, including the billion people without access to reliable power. ZeroBase is the leading innovator in off-grid power solutions for remote locations and austere environments. Our solutions reduce the cost and risk of fossil fuel dependence for defense, government, and commercial customers. Over 200 ZeroBase microgrid and modular hybrid power systems have been deployed to 16 countries.

ZeroBase was established in 2009 with the vision of making cleaner sources of energy more accessible by those most in need. Our goal is to make choosing, buying, owning, and operating renewable energy systems easier and more cost effective for programs looking to make a sweeping impact. Our team is dedicated to solving the difficult challenges of bringing energy to those beyond the grid. We are headquartered in Ferndale, Michigan, with offices in Washington D.C., in Oahu, Hawaii, and in Huntsville, Alabama.

ZeroBase's largest customer continues to be the U.S. Department of Defense. Our power systems have been tested and deployed by Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, intelligence and special operations agencies and to foreign governments through the Foreign Military Sales program. ZeroBase systems are used for expeditionary energy, C4ISR, tactical shelters, border security and entry control points, and at airfields. ZeroBase's commercial divisions focus on reducing industrial and government energy costs and on providing resilient energy solutions using clean power generation and advanced energy storage and management.

ZeroBase Energy LLC is owned and managed by Pegasus Strategic Partners LLC, a special situations group that invests on behalf of the partners of Pegasus Capital Advisors LP.



**ZeroBase Energy**  
*Ferndale*

Jaron Rothkop, president and CTO  
 Founded in 2009  
 Primary business: power systems  
 Sites in Michigan: 2  
[www.thezerobase.com](http://www.thezerobase.com)



## 2016 MICHIGAN SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION AWARD



ContentOro revolutionizes the way digital marketers and brands acquire and use content on their websites. The Ann Arbor-based technology company believes in an ideal internet; where authority wins, users have access to the best quality information, and businesses are rewarded for their expertise with highly qualified customers.

ContentOro was founded in 2014 by Bob Chunn to address a problem he had while attempting to attract and engage customers online. "Finding a freelancer or company to write for my sites was a time consuming and expensive proposition. The writing was inauthentic and usually written to promote keywords versus delivering valuable information to my customers."

ContentOro delivers high-quality content by working with publishers to extract text and images from the best books in the world and stream them to customers' websites. ContentOro's technology allows for the creation of unique customer experiences and a new way to sell products they're calling Commerce Enabled Content, which allows brands to seamlessly integrate products within the content their customers are coming for.

The ContentOro team is made up of a passionate group of international players who are experts in content marketing, publishing, and eCommerce. ContentOro has already won four awards recognizing the uniqueness and potential of their products.

### ContentOro Ann Arbor

Bob Chunn, CEO

Founded in June 2014

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
7 in 2015; 11 expected in 2016

www.contentoro.com



## 2016 MAIN STREET USA



Seeking alternative markets for the Michigan-produced navy bean, a group discovered that the gluten-free food market was in need of products with more protein and fiber. When navy beans were converted to flour, it was shown to be very adaptable as a base ingredient for a number of gluten-free products.

As a result, Mrs. Glee's Foods was founded in 2010 in Hillman, Michigan. The basic product is navy bean flour that is used to make a multi-purpose baking flour which in turn, is used to make a number of mixes. The basic navy bean flour is also used in making gluten-free pasta.

In the last two years, Mrs. Glee's has grown from three employees in October 2014 to nearly 40 in February 2016. Sales have increased over 10 times in the same time period as the business has seen a tremendous growth in its co-packing business. Products are now made for companies from Arizona to New York and throughout the Great Lakes area.

### Mrs. Glee's Foods Hillman

Charles Skinner, CEO

Founded in 2010

Primary business: production of gluten-free foods

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 37

www.mrsgleesfoods.com



## 2016 MICHIGAN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR

Located in northern Michigan, Armor Express designs, manufactures and markets a full line of NIJ and DoD certified ballistic and stab/spike resistant concealable and tactical body armor, K-9 armor, ballistic blankets and accessories. It is our mission to save lives by providing superior quality body armor with unparalleled protection, comfort, wearability, and service. Armor Express was incorporated in 2005.

One in every five police officers in America is wearing an Armor Express vest.

Our family culture at Armor Express is built upon seven core values. These tenets craft our products, guide our decisions and demand continuous improvement in everything we do. These core values are safety, trust, innovation, execution, legacy, quality, and passion.



### Armor Express Central Lake

Matt Davis, president and CEO

Founded in 2005;  
current leadership since 2005

Primary business: body armor  
manufacturer

Sites in Michigan: 3

Full-time equivalent employees:  
122 in 2015; 144 expected in 2016

www.armorexpress.com

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## 2016 WOMAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Nawal Motawi is a University of Michigan Art School graduate with a restless spirit and an interest in applied arts. She moved to Detroit to learn tile making at Detroit's storied Pewabic Pottery and returned to Ann Arbor two years later to make her own tiles. Motawi tiles are sold in over 300 shops and galleries across the country including the National Gallery of Art Museum Shop and Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin.



The company is known for its distinctive and beautiful designs, the integrity with which it treats customers and vendors, and the fact that it is a great place for employees to work. The employees are a tightly knit team of Michiganders who take their craft seriously.

Motawi is proud to be a Michigan native and an Arab American. Her father is a first generation immigrant to the U.S. Recently Motawi Tileworks was featured on the national PBS series "Craft in America" and in local media outlets in Michigan.

### Motawi Tileworks Ann Arbor

Nawal Motawi, founder and owner

Founded in 1992

Primary business: distinctive American art tiles

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees:  
38 in 2015

[www.motawi.com](http://www.motawi.com)



## 2016 SBDC CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR



Denise Hansen has been a proactive consultant for the Upper Peninsula and northern Michigan for eight years. While her specialty is marketing, she continually identifies resources outside this area to better serve her clients.

Hansen was instrumental in the passage of Public Law 564-14 which authorizes the co-location of cell phone antennas on police cell towers, thereby increasing the communication ability of small businesses in rural communities. She personally used her wide networks to educate state house and senate members on the business need for this infrastructure.

Hansen took the lead on a new website and a social media campaign to increase marketing opportunities for the Upper Peninsula Hidden Coast, a Michigan byway that runs along M-35 from Escanaba to Menominee.

She works closely with local economic development organizations to ensure the availability of services and initiated a relationship development program between the SBDC and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation's community assistance team at the state level. The depth and breadth of her collaboration between federal, state, and local organizations have proven invaluable in serving the rural communities of the Upper Peninsula.

### Michigan Small Business Development Center Escanaba

Denise Hansen, business consultant  
[www.sbdcmichigan.org/upper-peninsula-region](http://www.sbdcmichigan.org/upper-peninsula-region)



## 2016 SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

Russell Beaver has been active in the construction industry for over 55 years. An ironworker by trade, Beaver initially performed small concrete and steel erection projects. The company expanded to complete numerous pre-engineered building projects and in recent years, RB has pursued federal government works. RB Construction is a Native American-owned firm and is certified as an SBA 8(a) Small Disadvantaged Business, certified Service Disabled Veteran-owned Small Business, and a Michigan Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. The company has regional offices in Illinois, Missouri, and Florida.



Examples of these projects include:

- Over 30 design/build projects including work on national monuments
- Civil projects on navigational structures such as locks and dams on the Mississippi River
- Renovations and upgrades for hospitals and laboratories
- Construction and renovations at military facilities
- Historic renovations at high profile national parks and forests
- Federal clients include U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Veterans Administration, U.S. Air Force, National Park Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Air National Guard, General Services Administration and others

Sales in 2012 were \$9.4 million; \$20.6 million in 2013; and \$29.2 million in 2014.

During the Christmas holiday season the company sponsors a children's fundraising and toy drive for the North American Indian Association of Detroit.

### RB Construction Company Sterling Heights

Russell Beaver, president

Founded in: 1984

Primary business: pre-engineering building company

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 3

Full-time equivalent employees:  
29 in 2015

[www.rb-construction.com](http://www.rb-construction.com)

Fifth Third Bank proudly supports Michigan Celebrates and the Great Lakes Lender Conference.





## 2016 MICHIGAN SMALL BUSINESS EXPORTER OF THE YEAR



Firstronic successfully went through financial distress in 2009, and has resurged in the domestic electronic manufacturing industry through its strategy to rationalize the customer base. It has experienced a rapid growth over the past three years, with increased revenues and the addition of 250 employees during the time period. It is projected that the number of employees will double and sales will reach \$60 million by 2017.

Firstronic has developed innovative processes to enable its electronic manufacturing to be competitive in the U.S. and in an industry that is dominated by competitors from China and Mexico. The company is ambitious to be competitive globally by starting with very aggressive material pricing, partnered with much larger tier-1 competitors, using state of the art equipment and processes, and employing a highly trained skilled workforce. The company has developed a detailed marketing strategy to penetrate Mexico, China, Korea, Europe, and India. In the last three years, the majority of revenue growth has been driven by its export program and the company's export sales represents more than 75 percent of total sales.

### Firstronic LLC Grand Rapids

John Sammut, president and CEO; Peter Barclae, chairman; Steve Fraser, vice president of operations; Wally Johnson, vice president, finance, supply chain, IT

Founded in: 2000

Primary business: electronic assembly manufacturing company

Sites in Michigan: 1

Full-time equivalent employees: 325 in 2015

www.firstronic.com



## 2016 VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



Certified by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the National Veteran Business Development Council as veteran-owned, Contract Professionals Inc. is a global provider of technical professionals offering a wide range of services including staffing, managed services, specialty programs and technical publications. The company was named "101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work for 2015" and the "Brightest Company to Work for 2015" national award. During 2014-2015, the company's revenues grew 25 percent and the owners plan to double revenues over a three year period. The company has recently been ranked third on the Michigan Private 100 rankings of the fastest growing companies.

The company has extensive experience providing services to aerospace, automotive, defense, industrial, information technology, manufacturing and telecommunications industries. Part of their mission includes finding employment for our nation's veterans. CPI also specializes in finding employment for those who are transitioning from the military to civilian workforce.

### Contract Professionals Inc. Waterford

Steven York, founder/CEO, and Jim Cowper, president

Founded in 1982

Primary business: global staffing company

Sites in Michigan: 1; sites elsewhere: 6

Full-time equivalent employees: 380 in 2015

www.cpijobs.com



## 2016 SCORE COUNSELOR OF THE YEAR



Allen L. Wilson has been a SCORE counselor since 2003 and has served as chapter chair, vice chair, and treasurer. His experience as an executive with Caterpillar Corporation allows him to mentor on a wide variety of business areas, including logistics, purchasing, and production. As a former high school teacher, Wilson's passion for education is evident in his volunteer work with SCORE, including the development of a six-week workshop for high school students at the Newaygo County Career Technical Center.

One primary example of Wilson's dedication to service was when he was asked to join the County Career Technical Center, West Michigan Veterinary Services, a local business (Country Dairy,) and Michigan State University to help change dairy farming in northern Uganda from a subsistence model to a viable dairy industry. Following the establishment of a working dairy in the Gula District of northern Uganda as a functioning teaching model dairy, Al met with the headmaster of the school and helped to create a curriculum for the Ugandan people.

Wilson is an outstanding counselor and is committed to the spirit of entrepreneurship and future small businesses.

### SCORE Muskegon Counselor Muskegon

Allen L. Wilson, counselor/mentor  
www.scoremuskegon.org

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