

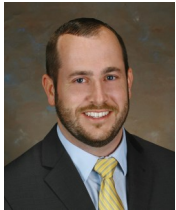


Quarterly News

In this issue...

- From the President’s Desk
- IEDC Honors BCU with Gold, Silver Medals
- Duncan Aviation Breaks Ground
- Going PRO Talent Fund Accepting Applications
- BCU Participates in CEO Action Summit
- Farewell Adam Reid
- US EDA Awards BCU \$522K
- Fort Custer Industrial Park Hosts 2022 MFG Day
- BCGo Renewed for FY 2022-2023
- City Creates Cannabis Coordinator Job
- DPW Announcement: No Wipes in the Pipes!

From the President’s Desk



By Joe Sobieralski
President & CEO

With the holidays fast approaching, I am looking forward to some well-earned downtime. It has been a busy autumn for the BCU team, filled with lots of travel, events, and projects.

Bridgette Jones and I traveled to Oklahoma City in September to attend the IEDC Conference and pick up our Gold and Silver awards for Excellence in Economic Development. I also attended the Hilton Owners conference in Las Vegas, to meet with other hotel operators and learn best practices. Robert Corder traveled to Dallas in November for the MEDC’s Dallas Market Blitz. There he met with ten site selectors based in Texas and talked up the Battle Creek region. This week, Bridgette is in Chicago for the Mid-America Economic Development Council’s Competitiveness Conference. And in a week, Robert and I will travel to Washington, DC. We will be meeting with Sen. Debbie Stabenow, Sen. Gary Peters and Rep. Bill Huizenga, as well as Defense Department officials at the Pentagon.

BCU also recently hosted two different visits from MEDC officials. In November, Executive Vice President, Chief Real Estate and Global Attraction Officer Terri Fitzpatrick toured the Fort Custer Industrial Park and viewed several buildings on the market. A week later, Senior Vice President for Small Business Services Amy Rencher visited Battle Creek for a series of meetings. She and her colleagues met with community stakeholders including BCU, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Battle Creek Community Foundation, the Small Business Development Team, and Northern Initiatives. They toured downtown Battle Creek and visited Snackwerks.

See “President’s Desk” on Page 4

IEDC Honors BCU with Gold and Silver Medals

In September, the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) recognized BCU with two awards for excellence for the McCamly Hotel renovation project. The IEDC recognizes outstanding and innovative development projects that significantly enhance revitalizations of communities, states, or regions. At the IEDC Annual Conference in Oklahoma City, BCU received the Gold award for Innovative Project Financing as well as the Silver award for Public-Private Partnerships.

Applicants were selected by a diverse panel of economic and community developers from around the world. In 2022, the IEDC received over 500 submissions from four countries.

"These awards are a testament to Battle Creek's ability to come together as a community and deliver on a

transformative project that will reshape the greater downtown area," said Joe Sobieralski, President and CEO of BCU. "We're grateful for the recognition by IEDC, the national and international standard. These nods are reminders that our community is turning a corner and on a path to resurgence."

BCU President Joe Sobieralski and Vice President Bridgette Jones receive the Gold award for Innovative Project Financing at the IEDC Annual Conference in Oklahoma City.



See “IEDC Honors” on Page 2

Duncan Aviation Breaks Ground on \$40 Million Expansion

In early October, Duncan Aviation hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the \$40 million expansion of their facility at the Battle Creek Executive Airport (BTL). The expansion will include a new hangar with 46,000 square foot space and a new two-story building with 56,000 square feet for storage, production, and offices.

The company expects to add as many as 70 new jobs as part of the project. When construction is complete in early 2024, Duncan will have approximately 480,000 square feet of space at BTL and employ more than 700 people in Battle Creek.

Andy Richards, Chief Operating Officer for Duncan Aviation in Battle Creek, remarked that the growth of business aviation along with the size of the aircraft is prompting the expansion.

“The result of this growth has been increased demand for hangar space required to complete the requested airframe, engine, interior, paint, and avionics modifications work for the business aircraft fleet,” he said.

The project is receiving assistance from the Michigan Economic Development Corp. via a \$488,000 Michigan Business Development Program grant.



Duncan Aviation COO Andy Richards speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony at the Battle Creek Executive Airport on October 7, 2022.

See “Duncan Aviation” on page 2

Going PRO Talent Fund Now Accepting Applications

The Going PRO Talent Fund application period for Fiscal Year 2023 opened on Monday, November 21, 2022. Applications will be accepted until noon on Monday, December 12, 2022.

The Going PRO Talent Fund provides grants to employers for training, developing, and retaining current and new employees. Training funded by the Talent Fund must be short-term and fill a demonstrated need experienced by the employer. Training must lead to a credential for a skill that is transferable and

recognized by industry. Training should be completed between February 1, 2023 and January 31, 2024.

Under the Going PRO program, employers can receive up to \$2,000 per person or \$3,500 per U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Registered Apprenticeship participant. Since 2014, the Going PRO Talent Fund has provided more than \$170 million to more than 5,000 Michigan employers with an average award amount of \$32,499. For Fiscal Year 2023, more than \$55 million will be available

to Michigan employers.

For 2023, the Going PRO Talent Fund will have a second application period, which will open in Spring 2023.

To learn more, contact Jessica Meskil, Michigan Works! Southwest Business Services Coordinator, at 269-249-7354 or meskil@upjohn.org.

To apply for the Going PRO Talent Fund, visit www.michigan.gov/TalentFund

BCU Participates in CEO Action Summit to Address Childcare Issues

On October 25, KC Ready 4s and Pulse at the Upjohn Institute hosted a CEO Action Summit at Bell's Eccentric Cafe in Kalamazoo. The summit, geared toward people in executive leadership, built on the CEO Summit held in March.

Partners included Battle Creek Unlimited, the Upjohn Institute, and Southwest Michigan First, with funding support from the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. Michelle Richard, Senior Education Advisor to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, discussed the investments the State of Michigan is making to stabilize the childcare industry.

At the event, Pulse unveiled a new online tool which helps employers address the childcare challenges facing their workforce. Attendees had an

opportunity to network, learn, and develop plans to take action. Community partners answered questions about the tools in the roadmap and provided personal connections based on employers' interest.

The Pulse Employer Roadmap is available here: pulseroadmap.org



Joe Sobieralski from BCU and Clarence Lloyd from Southwest Michigan First welcome guests to the October Childcare Summit.

Duncan Aviation from Page 1

The Battle Creek Tax Increment Finance Authority and the City agreed to provide up to \$2.5 million in financial assistance toward the expansion of the public-use apron to complete the project.

"We are excited to continue to grow with and where the market is headed both in aircraft size, and the number of inspections, modifications, and refurbishments that are expected in the future," Richards said. "With this expansion, we increase our ability to attract even more customers to Duncan Aviation's family and enjoy the atmosphere of the Battle Creek community."



Officials from Kellogg Community College, the Battle Creek City Commission, and BCU pose with Duncan Aviation leaders at the recent groundbreaking ceremony.

Farewell Adam Reid

In October, BCU said goodbye to Adam Reid. Adam joined BCU in May 2017 after completing his MBA at WMU's Haworth College of Business. During his time at BCU, Adam wore two hats. He served as the Manager of Foreign-Trade Zone #43 as well as the Manager of Special Projects. He was responsible for the Downtown Real Estate Improvement Fund, the TRAIN Program, the Washington Heights Entrepreneurial Fund, and the Tiger Room project. Adam joined the Export Controls, Sanctions & Trade Practice at FTI Consulting, a business advisory firm based in Washington, DC.

We wish Adam continued success in his career.

IEDC Honors from page 1

When the project is complete, the hotel will be reopened as a DoubleTree by Hilton. Renovations have been underway for more than a year and are expected to total more than \$59 million. The renovated facility will include a reconfigured plaza and greenspace between the hotel and Kellogg Arena. More than 10 local and state partners have helped finance the project.

"Communities need our profession now more than ever," said IEDC President and CEO Nathan Ohle. "This year's awardees exemplify the ingenuity, leadership, and determination needed to meet the challenges of today and the future. The winners of IEDC's Excellence in Economic Development awards represent the best of economic development and demonstrate

the level of leadership that our profession strives for every day," said Ohle.

The new hotel will feature 239 guest rooms; a new restaurant, beer garden, and kitchen; and a new ballroom and conference facilities. The exterior of the building is being refreshed and will have a new entrance, new windows, and an updated façade. All the hotel mechanical systems are being replaced, including the HVAC, boilers, and elevators.

The IEDC is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 5,000 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience.

US EDA Awards BCU \$522K for Food Startup Programs

In October, the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced 51 “Build to Scale” grants, totaling \$47 million, to organizations that support technology entrepreneurs, catalyze innovation, and fuel economic growth. BCU was awarded two grants totaling more than \$522,000, which will help grow a pair of food startup programs.

The Build to Scale program included two competitions. The Venture Challenge supports programs enabling high-growth tech startups, while the Capital Challenge increases access to capital in communities through early-stage investment funds,

networks, and training programs.

BCU received \$375,000 under the Venture Challenge for the Future Food Accelerator, which links R&D facilities, university innovation programs, and various experts for high-growth food and beverage companies in or relocating to south central Michigan. The accelerator is a collaboration between BCU, Michigan State University, Kellogg Community College, Kellogg Co., W.K. Kellogg Foundation, JPG Resources, and other local partners. The accelerator will support early-stage product development and provide companies with a single-entry point for food and beverage to access qualified

reviews. It also will serve as a proof-of-concept resource and provide various connections to relevant industry experts.

BCU received \$147,750 for the Food and Beverage Accelerator under the Capital Challenge. The funding will help boost BCU’s capacity to vet, validate, and make seed and angel investments in “compelling Western Michigan innovation-based, early stage, high-growth food manufacturing companies,” according to the EDA.

The most recent grant round follows \$2.1 million that BCU received in 2020 to develop the Southwest Michigan Accelerator Kitchen.

Fort Custer Industrial Park Hosts Manufacturing Day



Over 670 high school students from Battle Creek Central, Lakeview, Harper Creek, Pennfield, Calhoun County High School and St. Philip’s participated in the 2022 Battle Creek Area Manufacturing Day. Events were held at Kellogg Community College’s Regional Manufacturing Technology Center in the Fort Custer Industrial Park on October 18 and 19.

Students had the opportunity to speak with representatives from local manufacturing companies and tour the RMTc facilities. Students also toured Duncan Aviation and Rosler. Planning for the annual event was led by KCC, BCU, MiWorks!, and the Battle Creek Manufacturing Consortium. Special thanks to employers who participated, including Bleistahl, DENSO, Duncan Aviation, Kellogg, Rosler, Snackwerks, Vanguard, and YOU (KRESA).

Manufacturing Day is an initiative of The Manufacturing Institute, the workforce development and education partner of the National Association of Manufacturers, and the Fabricators & Manufacturers Association. The goal is to promote careers in modern manufacturing.

The BC Manufacturing Consortium played a vital role in planning the 2022 Manufacturing Day, providing invaluable insight that helped design the events. This year’s event was designed to increase student

awareness in manufacturing and begin the conversation on student pathways in Skilled Trades that lead to impactful and rewarding careers.

To keep the momentum growing, the BC Manufacturing Consortium is currently planning a follow-up event for school administrators and teachers. The goal is to forge closer relationships and discuss careers in manufacturing. This event is being planned as a professional learning opportunity, meaning the school admin/teachers who participate can gain time towards their state continuing education clock hours. This event is scheduled for February 22, 2023. Details will be announced soon. Once the teacher networking event is complete, the BC Manufacturing Consortium plans to collaborate with school leaders on a third event for students and parents.

To learn more about the BC Manufacturing Consortium and Manufacturing Day, contact John Hughes at hughes@bcunlimited.org.



Students look at a jet engine from Duncan Aviation at the RMTc.

BCGo Renewed for 2022-23

Battle Creek Transit announced in July that it received \$300,000 in funding from the Michigan MDOT to operate BCGo for the FY 2022-2023.

BCGo is a shared ride service, operated by BC Transit. Users book trips straight from their phones using a mobile app. The app matches multiple passengers headed in the same direction, maximizing ridership to limit unloaded miles. The city launched BCGO in 2021. To date, more than 2,500 users have created BCGo accounts and the service approximately 9,800 passenger trips.

The service began in 2021 as a 12-month pilot program with a \$395,505 grant from MDOT. The goal was to demonstrate the effectiveness of on-demand, county-wide public transportation.

The additional funding will extend BCGo service through at least late spring/early summer of 2023. After that, BC Transit and local leaders throughout Calhoun County will have discussions about the next steps to “continue providing critical public transportation services.”

“This extension gives us the ability to focus on the data we’ve already collected, and really develop a transportation model that works for Calhoun County,” said Battle Creek Transit’s Mobility Manager Kristy Grestini. “BCGo has already proven to be successful in our community, but this additional funding gives us the opportunity to build on what we have already been providing, and really demonstrate what a county-wide micro-transit system could do for our community in the future.”

In June 2022, the Kellogg Company announced a \$150,000 investment in BCGo, which provided two new vehicles, bringing the fleet to four. The new minivans are expected to arrive by the end of 2022, officials said.

BCGo service is available from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

For more information, call Battle Creek Transit at 269-966-3474 or visit bcgomi.com

President's Desk from page 1

BCU staff also attended the Burma Center's Friendraiser event as well as the Battle Creek Branch of the NAACP's annual Freedom Fund Dinner. It is wonderful to once again be able to participate in events like these in person.

As we close out the year, BCU has several big initiatives to keep an eye on. Work on the New Holland Brewery is ramping up. They have begun recruiting for the general manager and executive chef positions. The brewpub will feature a 4,000 square-foot beer garden with much of the space offered with a permanent cover and radiant heaters for year-round outdoor dining. The garden will also contain an outdoor walk-up bar, fire features, televisions, yard games, and a stage for entertainment. The opening is being planned for Spring 2023.

BCU has also been busy supporting the MEDC and community partners in Marshall and Emmett Township on several large projects. Marshall and Emmett Township are home to two of Michigan's mega sites, which could support large industrial investments. Over the past three years, more than 30 prospects have looked at these sites. Many of those projects are in the EV and semi-conductor sectors, and could create hundreds of new jobs.

The sites in Calhoun County are especially attractive, given their proximity to the Fort Custer Industrial Park and its existing company base. Because of the scale of the potential investments, these are regional projects and could significantly increase Battle Creek's population.

On a related note, BCU staff are also working on several housing initiatives. Housing is perhaps the city's biggest challenge. While The Milton and the Redwood Living development have added more than 250 new rental units, Battle Creek continues to have a severe housing shortage. We need a mix of housing (multi-family, condo, townhouse, single family, etc.) for all income levels. While BCU has not historically focused on housing, we are beginning to get involved in this vital sector. New housing investments are necessary in order for Battle Creek to continue to grow.

Finally, we had hoped to include photos of BCU's float from the Battle Creek Christmas Parade. Due to inclement weather, the event was rescheduled for Saturday, December 10. Look for pictures in our Winter 2023 edition.

Best wishes to everyone for a happy holiday season.

Contact BCU

Battle Creek Unlimited (BCU) is focused on investment generation and job creation in Battle Creek, Michigan. BCU works closely with community partners to attract new companies to the Battle Creek region while also supporting the growth of existing companies. BCU was established in 1972 to develop the Fort Custer Industrial Park (FCIP), the largest industrial park in Michigan. Today the FCIP is home to nearly 90 companies, including 25 international organizations, which collectively employ more than 13,000 people. The FCIP covers more than 3,000 acres, with over 1,000 acres available for development, and offers convenient access to rail, air cargo, interstate and international trade highways as well as an international port of entry and a Foreign-Trade Zone.

Battle Creek Unlimited

www.bcuunlimited.org
4950 W. Dickman Road, Suite 1
Battle Creek, MI 49037
TEL 269-962-7526

Email comments, questions or suggestions to:
BCUnewsletter@bcuunlimited.org

Follow BCU online:



City Adds Cannabis Coordinator

In FY 2021-2022, there were 41 marijuana businesses operating in Battle Creek. In that time, these companies collectively generated more than \$500,000 in tax revenue for the city. Of those, six cannabis companies have operations in the Fort Custer Industrial Park.

Given the size of the cannabis industry in Battle Creek and its regulatory requirements, the City of Battle Creek recently created the position of Cannabis Coordinator and named Jacquie McLean to the post. In this capacity, Jacquie will serve as the city's point person for all things cannabis-related, and act as a liaison between the city, state, and cannabis businesses to ensure that applicants comply with state and city regulations.

Existing cannabis businesses must renew their operating license by November 1 each year. The cost to renew an existing license in Battle

Creek is \$5,000. As part of her job, Jacquie will be setting up meetings with Battle Creek's cannabis business operators.

"As our volume has increased because of our industry interest in the City of Battle Creek, we really decided that it was important to streamline our processes, but most importantly have a resource for individuals in the industry," said Marcie Gillette, Battle Creek Community Services Director.

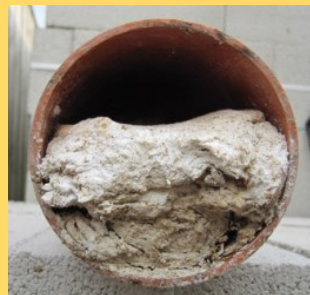
"They have someone, a go-to, in our community to answer questions, to work with them through the process on what it takes to actually get licensed here in the City of Battle Creek," said Gillette.

Jacquie can be reached at City Hall at 269-966-3311 or via email at jjmclean@battlecreekmi.gov.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE CITY OF BATTLE CREEK

No Wipes in the Pipes!

"Flushable" wipes continue to be a problem for Battle Creek's sanitary system. The Department of Public Works would like to remind the public not to flush baby wipes, cleaning wipes, paper towels, or tissues. Unlike toilet paper, these products do not break down. Once flushed, they are likely to clog the plumbing in your house, septic system, or in the public sewer system. When these products make their way into the public sewer system, they clump together, causing large obstructions in the sewer lines. They get tangled in pump stations which requires repairs of equipment and causes backups and discharge of raw sewage.



The problem has worsened in recent years, with more people using disinfecting wipes to combat COVID-19, cleaning door knobs, light switches, and work areas. Despite what the packaging may say, **no wipe is flushable**. This includes paper towels, baby wipes, cleaning wipes, make-up wipes, and facial tissues. These all should be disposed of in a trash can.

Questions? Contact Battle Creek's Waste Water Treatment Plant at 269-966-3513 or publicinput@battlecreekmi.gov.