

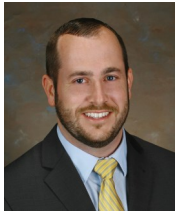


Quarterly News

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From the President's Desk



By Joe Sobieralski
President & CEO

On April 27, BCU held its 2023 Economic Update at the Kellogg Arena in downtown Battle Creek. Due to COVID-19, the event had not been held in-person since 2020. Almost 400

business leaders, community partners, and government officials attended the event, making it our largest event ever. I want to share some of the highlights from my presentation about BCU's projects and goals as we wrap up Fiscal Year 2022-2023 and our 5-Year Strategic Plan.

- In FY 2022-2023, BCU supported the creation of 145 new jobs paying an average of \$17/hour. In total, 906 jobs paying an average of \$17/hour were created over the past 5 years, beating our goal of 750 jobs.
- In FY 2022-2023, BCU facilitated over \$47.1 million in capital investment in Battle Creek. Our 5-year total was over \$293.6 million; the goal was \$250 million.
- In FY 2022-2023, 5 new companies established operations in Battle Creek. In total, 21 companies set up in Battle Creek over the past 5 years; our goal was 15 new companies.
- In FY 2022-2023, the Direct Investment Fund (DIF) closed on 1 new loan. In total, 12 new loans were executed over the past 5 years; the goal was 10 loans.
- Since FY 2018-2019, BCU has been awarded more than \$90.3 million in grants. We have leveraged \$44.7 million in MEDC support. We have awarded more than \$9.8 million in incentives to companies. And we have provided more than \$300,000 in support to community organizations.

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BCPS Announces Bearcat Advantage

On May 17, Battle Creek Public Schools (BCPS) announced the Bearcat Advantage, a new scholarship that will cover up to 100% of college tuition and fees for eligible Battle Creek Central High School graduates. The scholarship seeks to eliminate opportunity gaps for students and improve access to higher education. The scholarship will be available to the graduating class of 2023.

The Bearcat Advantage will:

- Cover up to 100% of tuition and mandatory fees at any public or private four-year college or university in Michigan, or at any of the nearly 100 eligible Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) across the country for eligible graduates of BCPS.

- Award scholarship amounts based on the length of time a student has been continuously enrolled at BCPS. For example, those who have been a student at BCPS for at least every year of high school will be eligible to receive a 65% scholarship. Those who have been a student at BCPS for all of K-12 will be eligible to receive a 100% scholarship.
- Be available to use for a four-year undergraduate degree for up to six years after high school graduation.

"At BCPS, we believe in every student's potential for success and are committed to tearing down obstacles that stand in their way," said BCPS Superintendent Kimberly Carter.

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TRMI Flips the Switch on Solar Array

On March 30, Tokai Rika Michigan (TRMI) hosted a ceremony to officially turn on its new solar array at its facility in the Fort Custer Industrial Park. The system consists of approximately 1500 solar panels and is the largest solar installation in Battle Creek.

TRMI is a subsidiary of Tokai Rika Co. Ltd, located in Nagoya, Japan. The solar project is part of Tokai Rika's global sustainability goals. The company is working to reduce its carbon footprint by 50% by 2050. The solar array is expected to generate 600 kilowatts of energy, enough to power more than 120 households for an entire year. The company expects the new system to reduce its carbon footprint by 20% over the next couple of years. The array was installed by Harvest Solar and Motor Shop Electric. The system utilizes Bifacial Solar Panels which generate power from the back side of the panels from reflected/ambient light.

TRMI manufactures automotive

components including window regulators, cruise control, turn signals, multi-function, and HVAC switches. Its customers include Toyota, Nissan, Subaru, Ford, and GM. TRMI established operations in Battle Creek in 1986 and was Tokai Rika's first North American manufacturing plant.



Tim Flynn from Motor Shop Electrical Construction (left) and Kazuhito Sawabe from TRMI turn on the new solar array.

New Faces at BCU

BCU is pleased to welcome Kris Martin and Aaron Gibson to its staff.

Kris comes to BCU after nearly 12 years as a Planner for the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission. In his new role as BCU's Urban Planner, he will manage BCU's efforts to naturalize the Kalamazoo River and help coordinate community development and placemaking projects throughout Battle Creek. In 2022, BCU received \$13 million as part of the state budget to begin the process of returning the Kalamazoo River to a natural state which can support wildlife and provide recreational use. Funds will be used for environmental assessment, property acquisition, and demolition of old industrial

facilities, including the shuttered Graphic Packaging facility and parts of the TreeHouse Foods facility. The US Army Corps of Engineers has been working with the City of Battle Creek for several years already and has begun work on a hydrology study to better understand the river's future flow.

Aaron joins BCU as the new Facilities Coordinator. He has a wealth of experience in the manufacturing, facilities management, and construction sectors. Prior to joining BCU, Aaron worked for the City of Battle Creek's Facility Maintenance department. In his new role, he will provide maintenance services for properties and facilities owned by BCU as well as the Battle Creek Tax Increment Finance Authority (BCTIFA). These include the Fort Custer Industrial Park, the Customs Cargo Center, and several downtown properties and

parcels. Aaron will lead the beautification efforts in the industrial park and maintain the proper appearance according to the park's protective covenants. He will work to ensure that BCU's facility and grounds are consistently maintained. Perhaps most importantly, Aaron will serve as the point of contact for after-hour emergencies in the industrial park.



Kris Martin (left) and Aaron Gibson recently joined the BCU staff.

BC Cargo Opens for 2023

The BC Cargo Pop Up Marketplace is scheduled to open the second week of June. The seasonal marketplace was created as a launch pad for entrepreneurs seeking to open a business. It provides an affordable cost to market entry and supports merchants with wrap-around services to nurture development and growth.

BC Cargo is comprised of seven recycled shipping containers retrofitted to create an area to eat, shop, relax, and enjoy downtown Battle Creek. It is located on city-owned property at 35 Hamblin Avenue W. in the parking lot of Full Blast and is managed by City of Battle Creek's Small Business Development office. So far, four merchants are committed for 2023:

- **Casa Grande Restaurant** – Healthy Latin food
- **BC Boba** – Bubble tea & lemonade
- **Queen By Sierra Shanelle** – Apparel, accessories, stationery, and children's learning products
- **The Up Vibe** – Handcrafted art and clothing

Merchants are selected through a competitive application process. The Small Business Development team serves as a mentor-base and assists each merchant with business planning and periodic coaching to create sustainability. To learn more, visit bccargo.org

President's Desk cont'd from page 1

I am excited about all the progress I see around Battle Creek. Construction on the Viking-Cives Great Lakes facility is accelerating. Phase 2 of the McCamly Hotel redevelopment is well underway. New Holland Brewing is open and business is booming. Site preparation is underway out in Marshall on the Ford BlueOval Battery Park project where they will build the next generation of EV batteries. All of this set the stage for the historic announcement from Battle Creek Public Schools about the Bearcat Advantage. This scholarship is nothing less than life changing for students and families. Moreover, it will have an incredible impact on our community for years to come.

Despite all our accomplishments, BCU is not resting on its laurels. We will soon begin drafting a new strategic plan. We will continue our focus on attracting and retaining industrial development to the Fort Custer Industrial Park, and expand our community development efforts, especially as it relates to housing and community vibrancy. Stay tuned for more details.

The Center to hold Industry 4.0 Technology Showcase at WMU

Manufacturers commonly experience challenges related to aspects such as productivity, quality, or the labor shortage – and others are not aware of where their problems exist because they do not closely track performance. In each of these cases, technology can be applied to support improvements.

The Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (The Center), in collaboration with Western Michigan University, will host a free event on Wednesday, June 7 showcasing how advanced technologies can propel companies into the future. This event will feature live demonstrations as well as opportunities to speak directly with experts about how each innovation could help your facility.

FEATURED TECHNOLOGY

- **Mir Robot** - Used for material and food delivery, medical and industrial sanitation, inventory control, retail, banking, warehousing, smart cities, and agriculture
- **Raise 3D FDM Printer, Formlabs SLA Printer and SLS Printer parts** - Used for part design, fixture design, prototyping, modeling, dental applications, jig creation, part replacement, and measurement
- **Light Guide Assistive Reality Table** - Used for assembly applications, operator training,

quality control, data collection, and process control

- **Tulip Digital Work Instruction & IOT Gateway** - Used for assembly applications operator training, quality control, data collection, process, and inventory control
- **Amper Machine Monitoring & Dashboarding** - Used for process and machine monitoring
- **PLC and Various Sensor Cart** - Used for process monitoring, process control, quality control, quality assurance, safety, machine building, and machine monitoring

The event will be held at the WMU College of Engineering (4601 Campus Drive in Kalamazoo) from 9:30 – 11:30 AM. Attendees will also learn about The Center's FREE Technology Opportunity Assessment and how it helps identify technologies that will provide maximum improvements and return on investment.

The event is free but registration is required. The event is open to Michigan manufacturers only. To register, visit Kalamazoo Industry 4.0 Technology Showcase



Restore(269) Acquires Anson Hotel

In May, Restore(269) closed on the former Anson Hotel building, located at 121 W. Michigan Avenue. The company, owned by Cody and Caitlynn Newman, is responsible for the redevelopment of the Ratti Building (115 W. Michigan Avenue) and the RecordBox (15 Carlyle Street).

BCU acquired the property in 2017 from the Calhoun County Land Bank. It was part of the original Request For Proposals which included 64 W. Michigan Avenue, now home to New Holland Brewing, and 15 Carlyle Street.

The three-story brick building was built in 1923 and has approximately 13,600 square feet. Restore(269) plans to invest \$3 million to redevelop the property, which will include a deli/market and eight apartments. SproutBC

will operate the ground floor market. Plans call for seven 2-bedroom apartments and one 1-bedroom unit.

The property has been vacant since 1997. BCU repaired the building's roof and façade in 2020 to ready the property for redevelopment. Work on the building is expected to start this summer and be completed by December 2024. To learn more, visit restore269.com.



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"We believe that equity is about opportunity, and this scholarship brings the possibility of higher education to students who otherwise may not have the resources to pursue it. Our vision for success focuses on eliminating opportunity gaps that have existed for many years as a result of systemic inequities, and developing world-class educational experiences for the students we serve."

In order for Battle Creek to offer a bright future to its families and young people, all children must have the opportunity to get a quality education. The Bearcat Advantage opens a new pathway to four-year colleges and universities for more students in this community by removing the potential barrier of student loan debt. Those who previously may have had to turn down their dream school or who may not have even considered college as an option due to financial circumstances now have expanded opportunities to pursue higher education. In addition to already existing scholarships and resources for post-secondary opportunities at two-year colleges and trade schools, the Bearcat Advantage will have a positive impact on BCPS students and the broader Battle Creek community for generations to come.

The Bearcat Advantage was made possible by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), which has served

as a longtime partner to BCPS and has been committed to supporting children and families in Battle Creek since its founding. In 2017, WKKF provided the district with a historic five-year, \$51 million investment in support of a district transformation with the goal of increasing racial equity by reducing barriers to success for children in the community.

The transformation has spurred new opportunities for students to thrive by rolling out new academic and extracurricular programs, and increased systems of support for BCPS families. For example, Battle Creek Central High School was re-envisioned with a Career Academies model to provide all students with the opportunity to explore different career paths through hands-on, experiential curriculum while developing the skills necessary to excel in school, the workforce and beyond. BCPS has spent the past six years establishing a strong, sustainable foundation for student success; this new scholarship will now play an integral role in ensuring the success of each student beyond graduation day.

"The Bearcat Advantage is not just an investment in our students; it's an investment in our hometown of Battle Creek," said WKKF President and CEO La June Montgomery Tabron. "With this opportunity, current and future generations of Bearcats will find their own unique path to success and shape our collective future."

Reminder about Industrial Park Protective Covenant

Properties in the Fort Custer Industrial Park are governed by a protective covenant. The covenant is designed to permit major manufacturing operations and ensures that the industrial park is properly maintained.

While the park is zoned I-2 (Heavy Industry), the park covenant prohibits certain industries such as salvage & scrap processing, stockyards & animal slaughter, and industrial storage. The covenant prohibits retail operations (except on land zoned for commercial use) as well as residential facilities. The covenant also limits building heights to 40', though a variance can be granted.

All new construction, as well as any modification, addition, or improvement to an existing building within the industrial park must first be approved by the BCU Development Review Board. This includes signage, parking lot improvements, landscaping, fencing, outdoor storage, etc. Only once the Review Board has given its approval will the city approve site plans and issue building permits. For more info, contact Robert Corder at corder@bcunlimited.org

Event Connects Educators and Manufacturers



The Battle Creek Manufacturing Consortium held a "Build Our Future" event at Geislinger on Thursday, April 20. The purpose of the event was to connect manufacturing, skilled trades, and education to explore the rewarding career pathways that are available within the Manufacturing and Skilled Trades sectors.

Representatives from Geislinger, Duncan Aviation, Rosler, Viking-Cives, CTI Mechanical, Snackwerks, and the Lakeview Robotics Team guided educational partners through what is possible when one chooses a career in these sectors. Those in the education field were given a tour of the Geislinger facility, provided a teaser of Emergenetics by Duncan Aviation, and were able to address a panel of industry professionals on their personal journey through their career pathways.

The "Build Our Future" platform is intended to be used as a series of events and efforts from the Battle Creek Manufacturing Consortium and Education Partners to build interest in these lucrative and rewarding careers. A special thank you to Geislinger for hosting and providing refreshments for the event.

The Battle Creek Manufacturing Consortium is comprised of local manufacturers and representatives from area partners such as Battle Creek Unlimited, Michigan Works! Southwest, Kellogg Community College, and the Calhoun Area Career Center. Those interested in attending future events or in involvement in the Manufacturing Consortium should contact John Hughes, Economic Development Specialist, at hughes@bcunlimited.org.

BCU Out and About

BCU President & CEO Joe Sobieralski, Vice President Robert Corder, and Japan Consultant Ken Masumoto attended a reception hosted by Consul General Yusuke Shindo celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. The event was held in February at the GM Wintergarden in downtown Detroit. Guests sampled a variety of sake from Japan, including several from Michigan's sister prefecture Shiga. From left: Joe Sobieralski, Seiko Shindo, Consul General Yusuke Shindo, and Robert Corder.



On April 18, BCU President & CEO Joe Sobieralski spoke at a ceremony held at the WMU College of Aviation announcing a renewed matriculation agreement with Kellogg Community College. The agreement will help minimize credit loss and duplication of coursework when a student transitions from completing an associate degree program at KCC to pursuing a bachelor's degree at WMU, saving students time and money. Officials also

signed numerous program-based transfer pacts during Monday's ceremony, including transfer pacts for aviation flight science, biology, business analytics, exercise science, manufacturing engineering technology, nursing, public health and sustainable brewing. A similar ceremony was held with KCC and Grand Valley State University on May 5. WMU and GVSU are the two most popular destinations for KCC students who transfer to a 4-year university.



Vice President Robert Corder attended a networking reception in Novi on April 27 for a delegation representing 30 companies from Japan. The event was organized by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and JETRO, the Japanese government's trade promotion agency. The group visited Michigan in advance of the SelectUSA event in Washington, DC, scheduled for the following week. Many of the companies are considering investments in the USA and were eager to learn more about opportunities in Michigan. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer addressed the delegates and made sure to mention Battle Creek's cluster of Japanese companies.

Summer Events in Battle Creek

The warm weather brings a variety of outdoor events to Battle Creek. From farmers markets to outdoor concerts to the National Cereal Festival, summer is a great time to get out and enjoy the best of Battle Creek.

EVENTS

June 3	Taste of the Creek
June 9	National Cereal Festival Parade
June 10	National Cereal Festival
June 10	Cereal City Classic 5k/10k Run/Walk
June 24	Del Shannon Classic Car Show
June 25	Breaking Bred Bazaar
June 29 - July 4	Field of Flight Air Show & Balloon Festival
July 8	YMCA Goguac Lake Swim
July 15	Cereal City Triathlon & Duathlon
July 15	Battle Creek Caribbean Festival
July 29	Leilapalooza Music Festival
July 30	Breaking Bred Bazaar
August 26	Backyard Burgers & Brewsfest
August 27	Breaking Bred Bazaar



FARMERS MARKET

Battle Creek Farmers Market kicked off its 2023 season on May 17. The farmers market provides fresh, locally grown foods, as well as local food vendors every Wednesday from 9 AM to 1 PM. The market is held at Festival Market Square on McCamly Street downtown. The market features live music provided by local musicians and runs through October.



In addition to the Wednesday markets, Festival Market Square will host monthly night markets during the season. These events will feature live music and food trucks. Night Markets will be held from 5-8 PM on June 16, July 14, August 18, September 15, and October 13. For more info, visit kelloggarena.com/farmersmarket

POST BAND CONCERTS

The Post Band is a summer staple in Battle Creek. Made up of area high school students as well as seasoned musicians, the concert band has six free concerts scheduled for the 2023. Shows will be held at Festival Market Square on Thursdays in June and July, starting at 7:00 PM. The Post Band creates a special theme each week and is performed rain or shine. In case of inclement weather, the concert will be held inside the Kellogg Arena.

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.

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