

Quarterly News

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From the President's Desk

By Joe Sobieralski
President & CEO

The past several months have been a wild ride for the team at Battle Creek Unlimited (BCU). We kicked off September with our trip to Japan. This year, Battle Creek Mayor Mark Behnke and City Commissioner Jim Lance accompanied the BCU team. From Tokyo, the group traveled via bullet train to Yokohama, Osaka, and Nagoya where we met with several of the Japanese companies with operations in

Battle Creek. We expressed our appreciation for their continued investments and talked about what is going on in the city. The BCU team also joined Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the official Michigan delegation at the Midwest U.S.-Japan Association Conference, an annual meeting which brings together senior government and

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Mars Closes on Kellanova Purchase

Mars, Incorporated announced on December 11 that it had closed on the acquisition of Kellanova. The company first announced its plan to acquire Kellanova in August 2024.

Kellanova's portfolio includes Pringles, Cheez-It, Pop-Tarts, Rice Krispies Treats, RXBAR, and

Kellogg's international cereal brands. The company was created in October 2023 with the separation of Kellogg's North American cereal business, which was renamed WK Kellogg Co.

Mars was founded in 1911 and is privately held by the Mars family.

See "Mars" on page 8

GVSU Celebrates the Battle Creek Innovation Hub

The afternoon of Thursday, October 9, was a beautiful fall day, with a clear blue sky. It was the perfect day to celebrate the new Battle Creek Innovation Hub. The project is a partnership between Grand Valley State University (GVSU), Battle Creek Unlimited (BCU), and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF).

In 2024, the WKKF awarded GVSU a grant for \$10.4 million, to expand their presence in Calhoun County. The 30,000 square foot facility, located on Jackson Street in downtown Battle Creek, will offer degree classes as well as continuing education courses. It will also

serve as the new home to BCU's Battle Creek Food Reimagined (BCFR) initiative, which aims to grow the local food innovation economy.

With hundreds of people in attendance, the celebration kicked off with the GVSU Laker Marching Band, followed by remarks from local community leaders and school officials. In her remarks, WKKF President and CEO La June Montgomery Tabron said, "Battle Creek is our hometown. This is where Mr. Kellogg started our foundation nearly a century ago... and our

See "Celebration" on page 3

Ferrero Completes Acquisition of WK Kellogg Co

Congratulations to the Ferrero Group, which successfully completed their acquisition of WK Kellogg Co in late September. Ferrero announced its intent to acquire WK Kellogg Co on July 10, 2025.

WK Kellogg Co was split off of Kellogg's in October 2023. It retained the cereal product portfolio for the U.S., Canadian, and Caribbean markets. Following the acquisition, Ferrero said that the cereal business would continue to be based in Battle Creek. In addition to the headquarters building downtown, Battle Creek is home to the Porter Street cereal factory.

Based in Alba, Italy, Ferrero is the second largest chocolate producer and confectionery company in the world. The company was founded in 1946 by Piero Ferrero. Today, his grandson Giovanni Ferrero serves as the company's executive chairman and majority owner. The Ferrero Group is privately held.

Ferrero is famously known for the chocolate-hazelnut spread Nutella and Ferrero Rocher praline candies. The company also manufactures Tic Tacs as well as Kinder chocolates.

See "Ferrero" on page 4

Amanda Zimmerlin Starts as City Manager

Congratulations to Battle Creek's new City Manager Amanda Zimmerlin, who officially started work in early October. She takes over from Rebeccas Fleury, who retired in November 2024 after ten years in the position. Assistant City Manager Ted Dearing served as the Interim City Manager during the transition.

Zimmerlin previously served as City Manager for Clayton, Ohio, a suburb of Dayton. Before that, she was the Assistant City Administrator for Springdale, Ohio from 2016 to 2020. Zimmerlin attended the University of Dayton, where she earned a bachelor's degree in political science and a Master of Public Administration.

A native Buckeye, this is her first time living out of state.

As City Manager, Zimmerlin is a member of BCU's Board of Directors. She also sits on the boards of the Battle Creek Tax Increment Finance Authority (BFTIFA), the Battle Creek Local Development Finance Authority (BCLDFA), and the Battle Creek Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BCBRA).

Zimmerlin has said that her priorities include housing, childcare, and economic development.



BCU's Joe Sobieralski Recognized as a 40 Under 40 Business Leader

In late September, Crain's Grand Rapids Business announced its 2025 40 Under 40, which recognizes the rising stars of West Michigan's business community. This year's group of honorees included BCU President & CEO Joe Sobieralski.

For more than 30 years, from Chicago to Cleveland, Michigan to New York, Crain's has highlighted CEOs, founders, innovators, and community leaders under 40 years old who are shaping their communities. Each of the honorees was nominated by their colleagues or peers and selected through a rigorous process led by the Crain's Grand Rapids Business editorial team.

Honorees were celebrated at a gala dinner held in October at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids. The 2025 group included lawyers, accountants, elected officials, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and nonprofit executives. Sobieralski was the sole honoree from Battle Creek.

Sobieralski joined BCU in December 2015, and was named President & CEO in November 2016. Regarding his tenure in Battle Creek, he remarked that "relationships and trust" were the keys to his success.



CRAIN'S GRAND RAPIDS BUSINESS 2025



Joe Sobieralski
President & CEO
Battle Creek Unlimited

Ride Calhoun Begins Operations



On October 1, the Transportation Authority of Calhoun County (TACC) officially began operating under its new identity: Ride Calhoun. This marks a major milestone in the evolution of public transportation across Calhoun County, following the final day of service under the Battle Creek Transit name on September 30.

The Ride Calhoun initiative will enhance quality of life by providing affordable and reliable Fixed-Route Bus service, Paratransit and On-Demand rides for the Albion, Battle Creek, Marshall and Springfield communities.

While the brand has changed, the people behind the service – the drivers and support staff – remain the same. Service has continued without interruption, and riders can expect the same reliability and care they've always known.

To support this transition, TACC entered into a Support Services Agreement with the City of Battle Creek, effective October 1 through June 30, 2026. Through this agreement, the City is providing operational, maintenance, administrative, managerial, financial, and technical services to TACC, ensuring a smooth and stable launch for Ride Calhoun.

Over the coming months, riders will begin to see visible updates:

- Vehicles will be rebranded with Ride Calhoun's new look
- Bus stop signage will be refreshed
- New technology will be introduced to improve rider experience

Behind the scenes, Ride Calhoun is building a foundation for long-term success, guided by a dedicated Board of Directors and a mission focused on equity, accessibility, and innovation. For updates and information, follow Ride Calhoun on social media and visit their website, ridecalhoun.org.



Celebration, cont'd from page 1

commitment to our hometown remains unwavering. The opening of Grand Valley State University's Battle Creek Innovation Hub is a shining example of what happens when we come together with shared vision and purpose. This space is much more than a building. It's a launch pad for great ideas, a hub for equitable economic growth... a place where education, innovation, and community come together."

GVSU President Philomena Mantella remarked, "For Michigan to take its place as one of the leading states in the country, it is going to take all of us working together. The Battle Creek Innovation Hub is a perfect example of how education, the private sector, nonprofits, and elected officials can align on building structures that will equip Michigan for the future."

In his remarks, BCU President & CEO Joe Sobieralski said, "Today, GVSU is doubling down on its presence, partnership, and entrepreneurship offerings for the residents of Battle Creek and bringing its extensive

array of programming centered around entrepreneurship and needs-based educational offerings."

GVSU graduate and BCU Program Coordinator Jonah Hurtado-Macias remarked, "What an exciting and transformative day this is for our city, our home, and for every builder, dreamer, and doer in this room! This Hub represents a single front door where ideas meet resources, passion meets community, and potential turns into progress. It's not just a building, it's a bridge. It's a place where innovation is no longer a distant dream but a local reality."

With the speeches done, the dignitaries gathered on the stage to cut the ribbon and officially dedicate the space. Attendees then were able to tour the new facility and see the classrooms, café, and shared commercial kitchen. It was a wonderful beginning for an exceptional addition to Battle Creek.

BELOW, LEFT: GVSU and Battle Creek leaders including Joe Sobieralski, La June Montgomery Tabron, and Philomena Mantella cut the ribbon for the Battle Creek Innovation Center. BELOW, RIGHT: Louie the Laker and Tony the Tiger pose with Kara Van Dam, Vice President and CEO, GVSU Omni (left) and GVSU President Philomena Mantella.



BCU Hosts 2025 Economic Outlook Event

More than 320 business and community leaders attended BCU's 2025 Economic Outlook event, held on Tuesday, November 4. The event took place at the DoubleTree by Hilton Battle Creek.

BCU President & CEO Joe Sobieralski started the event with an update on BCU's activities over the past two years and the progress of BCU's 2030 strategic plan. Dr. Paul Isely, Associate Dean and Professor of Economics at Grand Valley State University, provided expert analysis on current economic trends and their implications for regional growth. Dr. Isely shared that Battle Creek's economy was outperforming the Grand Rapids region as well as the State of Michigan. Finally, author, entrepreneur, and AI expert Frankie Russo delivered a high-energy keynote on leveraging innovation and technology to drive business success. He demonstrated several new AI tools companies can use to help them grow.

Tables were decorated with a variety of treats from Post, Kellanova, and WK Kellogg

Co, as well as candy from Mars and Ferrero.

The 2025 Economic Outlook was made possible through the generous support of our sponsors, including:

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WK Kellogg Co

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Dr. Paul Isely from GVSU talked about the current state of the US and Michigan economies.



Author and AI expert Frankie Russo talked about the impact of AI and showed some of the tools available to companies to help them adapt and grow.

IPUSA Breaks Ground on Next Phase of Watkins Road Spec Building

On Wednesday, November 19, officials from the City of Battle Creek, BCU, Clark Logic, Great Lakes Capital, and Wolverine Building Group broke ground on Phase 2B of the Watkins Road Spec Building project. This second phase of construction will add an additional 252,000 square feet to the building at 201 Watkins Road, for a total of 504,000 square feet of industrial space.

The project is being developed by Industrial Partners USA (IPUSA), a partnership between Clark Logic and Great Lakes Capital. This will be the third phase of a multi-year project.

In total, IPUSA will have 774,000 SF of new space at Exit 92 along I-94. The new facility will have 32' ceilings, 6" floors, 12 loading docks, and knockouts for an additional 20 docks for future expansion.

Construction on IPUSA's first spec building on Watkins Road, totaling 270,000 square feet, began in September 2020. Work on Phase 2A kicked off in December 2023. Construction on Phase 2B is expected to be completed by August 1, 2026.

To learn more about the building, visit industrialpartnersusa.com



ABOVE: local dignitaries including Battle Creek Commissioner Jesscia LaCosse, Mayor Mark Behnke, and BCU President & CEO Joe Sobierski break ground on the Phase 2B of the Watkins Road Spec Building project. BELOW: an aerial view of the Watkins Road construction site where IPUSA is adding an additional 252,000 SF.



Ferrero, cont'd from page 1

Over the past decade, Ferrero has made several strategic acquisitions, which have expanded their portfolio significantly. In March 2017, the company purchased chocolate maker Fannie May. Later that year, they acquired the Ferrera Candy Company, maker of Brach's, Jelly Belly, Now and Later, and Nerds candies. In 2018, Ferrero purchased several brands from Nestle, including Butterfinger and Baby Ruth. In 2019, the company acquired several businesses from Kellogg's, including Famous Amos cookies,

Keebler, and Mother's Cookies, a sister company to Battle Creek's Archway Cookies. And in December 2022, it acquired Wells Enterprises, owner of ice cream brands like Blue Bunny, Blue Ribbon, and Bomb Pop.

With the acquisition of WK Kellogg Co, the Ferrero Group now has more than 61,000 employees around the world.

BCU welcomes Ferrero and looks forward to working with them as they begin their next chapter here in Battle Creek.

President's Desk, cont'd from page 1

business leaders. Trips like these are all about building and maintaining relationships, especially in Japan, which is critically important for Battle Creek.

In October, Grand Valley State University (GVSU) officially opened the Battle Creek Innovation Hub in the former Kendall Center downtown. This is a cooperative effort between BCU, GVSU, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, who funded the project. The renovated space will host degree classes as well as GVSU's OMNI program for adult learners.

In November, BCU hosted its 2025 Economic Outlook event. The event, held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Battle Creek, was packed. The audience enjoyed great presentations from our speakers: Dr. Paul Isely from Grand Valley State University, and entrepreneur and AI expert Frankie Russo. Special thanks to all of our sponsors whose generosity helped make the event a success.

Several new businesses launched this fall. The Texas Roadhouse opened in late September, across from the new Olive Garden off Beckley Road. Gull Lake Distilling opened its new restaurant downtown in October. In November, Uproot Market & Eatery cut the ribbon on their new co-op grocery across the street. And San Francisco Latin American Cuisine opened at the Battle Creek Executive Airport in late November. Great to see some new options in Battle Creek, with more on the way. Omurice Ramen & Boba will soon open on Beckley Road, and construction is underway on the Jack in the Box on Capital Avenue, expected to open in early 2026.

On the industrial side, there are several new projects in the pipeline. IPUSA recently broke ground on the next phase of the Watkins Road spec building. Indiana-based ProTec Panel & Truss has started operations and is actively hiring.

Construction has begun at R + L Carriers on West Columbia Avenue. At the Battle Creek Executive Airport, Junkers Aircraft will soon complete construction of their new facility, where they will manufacture reproduction a sport planes based on a 1930s design. Work on MICH-AIR, BCU's advanced air mobility initiative, is accelerating. Look for an announcement about that project soon. BCU staff are working on several housing projects, including a residential housing TIF.

Added all up, we are ending 2025 on a high note. On behalf of all of us at BCU, we wish you a wonderful holiday season and a prosperous New Year. See you in 2026!

Battle Creek Food Reimagined Update

Community in Action: A Season of Learning, Momentum, and Milestones in Battle Creek

This fall, Battle Creek Food Reimagined (BCFR) and our partners witnessed an extraordinary season of education, collaboration, and progress across the city's growing entrepreneurial ecosystem. From packed conversations to ribbon cuttings and program launches, the months leading up to 2026 were shaped by one shared theme: community showing up to build something bigger together.

We kicked things off on September 11 at What's Cookin' in BC at Café Rica, where entrepreneurs, supporters, and ecosystem partners gathered for an evening rooted in real connection. Thought-provoking insights from Al Shifflett III, MBA, and Amy Hilton, Program Manager of Entrepreneurship Initiatives at Grand Valley State University, sparked meaningful discussion and action. With BBQ from John Capers of Pops Family Kitchen rounding out the night, the event highlighted how relationships remain the foundation of a thriving entrepreneurial community.

Just a week later, excitement continued as BCFR partnered with Ingalls Pictures to begin production on a hype video celebrating BCFR and the grand opening of the Battle Creek Innovation Hub. Filmed in downtown Battle Creek ahead of the October 9 opening, this project captures more than moments—it reflects a movement redefining food, innovation, and entrepreneurship in the Cereal City.

That momentum carried into October with a powerful community celebration at the Battle Creek Innovation Hub. Attendees gathered to celebrate the opening of GVSU Omni and preview the future home of BCFR, an initiative of BCU. Recognized by the MEDC as both a Small Business Support Hub and a SmartZone, BCFR is designed to support inclusive growth through accelerator kitchens, coworking space, industry expertise, and tailored business support. The celebration featured inspiring remarks from regional leaders, live music, food trucks, and a ribbon-cutting that symbolized what collaboration can achieve.

The Innovation Hub quickly became a place of action. On October 6, GVSU launched the 2025 MVE-Lab Cohort inside the new space, welcoming founders into a 10-week program designed to strengthen ideas and prepare participants to pitch for \$15,000 in funding. This milestone underscored the power of partnership between BCFR, GVSU, MEDC, BCU, and the Small Business Hub.

Days later, BCFR reached a major operational milestone when the Start Kitchen received its Food Service – Fixed Establishment License. This achievement officially opened the doors for food entrepreneurs to create, test, and grow in a fully certified commercial kitchen in downtown Battle Creek.



Education and celebration continued into November with the graduation of Michigan SBDC's third Recipe for Success cohort, hosted and sponsored by BCFR. They wrapped up in December with the What's Cookin' in BC Holiday Celebration. From hard-hat tours to shared meals, these moments reflected a year defined by learning, partnership, and progress.

As we close out 2025, we do so with deep gratitude for our partners, participants, and community members who continue to believe in, and build, the future of food entrepreneurship in Battle Creek.

TOP LEFT: We're cooking up something special with Ingalls Pictures... a Hype Video celebrating Battle Creek Food Reimagined and the grand opening of the Battle Creek Innovation Hub. The BCFR team spent a day shooting at the DoubleTree by Hilton in downtown Battle Creek. From left: Heather Meyer, Gabriela Perez Hernandez, and Jonah Hurtado-Macias.

ABOVE: Battle Creek showed up and showed out for the September "What's Cookin' in BC!" Thanks to everyone who joined us at Café Rica for an inspiring evening of entrepreneurship, innovation, and authentic community connection. Special appreciation to Al Shifflett III and Amy Hilton from GVSU for sharing practical insights that sparked real conversations.

LEFT: BCFR was proud to host the graduation of the Michigan SBDC's third Recipe for Success cohort! Thank you to our partners who helped make this cohort a success, including John Schmitt and Wendy Spreenbergs from the SBDC, ServSafe Instructor & Proctor Dana Edwards, and Laura Romito from the MSU Product Center. Congratulations to all the grads! We can't wait to see what you cook up next.

Ford Future Builders Labs Coming to Battle Creek Area Schools

On September 30, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer joined representatives from the Ford Motor Company, Ford Philanthropy, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to announce a \$1.54 million investment to create high-tech, hands-on learning labs. The project, called Ford Future Builders Labs, will benefit the four school districts in the Battle Creek area (Battle Creek Public Schools, Lakeview School District, Harper Creek Community Schools, and Pennfield Schools), as well as the Detroit Public Schools Community District and Marshall Public Schools. The announcement was made as part of the Ford Pro Accelerate Summit, held at the newly renovated Michigan Central Station in Detroit.

The initiative will outfit schools with Fabrication Labs equipped with tools like 3D printers, laser cutters, and CNC routers. Students will get first-hand experience with

modern tools, which will support learning in mechatronics, robotics, and advanced manufacturing. It will enable teachers to facilitate learning experiences that will help develop critical skills necessary for the 21st century. Students will engage in hands-on learning by designing, building, and testing solutions to real-world challenges. The Ford Future Builders Labs will also expose students to career opportunities, especially in advanced technology sectors like sustainable energy, semiconductors, aerospace, defense, mobility, and electric vehicles.

"The Ford Future Builders Labs will help transform how students learn," said Mary Culler, President of Ford Philanthropy. "It is about moving beyond textbooks to hands-on learning, blending academic knowledge with vital practical skills like 3D printing and coding. This "learning by doing" approach not only builds technical expertise but also

fosters critical thinking and problem-solving, preparing our young people for the dynamic jobs of tomorrow."

The funding will also be used to hire teachers with expertise in the new equipment. These teachers will work with staff to create lesson plans and train students on how to use the equipment. At Battle Creek Central High School, work on the new Fabrication Lab will begin in early 2026, and should be done in time for the 2026-2027 school year.

These investments come as construction on the Ford BlueOval Battery Park in Marshall continues. The \$3 billion facility, which is nearly a mile long, will total 2 million square feet and have approximately 1,700 employees. The plant will manufacture lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries for future Ford EVs. Production is slated to begin in late 2026.

Duncan Aviation's Battle Creek Facility Approved as FAA Test Site

In October, Duncan Aviation announced that its Battle Creek facility was officially approved as a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Testing Center. Located within Duncan Aviation's Technical Education Center (TEC) on Columbia Avenue, this is Duncan Aviation's only facility with this designation.

With this new testing center, Duncan Aviation team members will no longer need to travel an hour or more to reach the nearest FAA facility. The site also serves students from nearby flight and Airframe & Powerplant (A&P) schools, providing greater access to the exams required for certifications and career advancement.

FAA Testing Centers play a vital role in supporting the FAA's mission by providing a secure, standardized environment for administering Airman Knowledge Tests (AKTs). These exams are required for a variety of aviation certifications. Available testing capabilities include:

- Knowledge tests for pilots, mechanics, and aviation professionals
- FAA-approved testing materials and

- supplement books
- Secure, standardized environment for exam integrity

The new FAA Testing Center in Battle Creek serves aspiring pilots pursuing private, commercial, and advanced certifications as well as aviation mechanics seeking certification. Aviation professionals, such as flight instructors and engineers, will also be able to utilize the center.

Adding this service reinforces Duncan Aviation's commitment to team member development and strengthens its connection to the broader aviation community by supporting future professionals in their training.



MIOSHA Offering Safety Grants

Michigan small businesses with 250 employees or less can apply to the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) for a matching grant to purchase equipment and associated training to create safer, healthier work environments. The MIOSHA Workplace Improvement to Safety and Health (MIWISH) grant program offers a dollar-for-dollar match, up to \$5,000, for qualifying employers. Priority consideration for industries and hazards such as amputations, cannabis, heat-related illness, trenching and excavation, among others.

The new grant cycle began in October, and grants will be awarded until funds are exhausted. Information on eligibility and how to apply is available here: Michigan.gov/MIOSHAgrants



Battle Creek Out & About in Japan

In September, the BCU team traveled to Japan, continuing a long tradition that dates back to 1974. This year, the Battle Creek delegation included President & CEO Joe Sobieralski, Vice President Robert Corder, and Japan Advisor Ken Masumoto, as well as Battle Creek Mayor Mark Behnke and Commissioner Jim Lance.

The group began the trip in Tokyo then traveled to Yokohama, Osaka, Nagoya and

back to Tokyo. We met with companies including DENSO, Musashi, Yorozu, UACJ, Hi-Lex, and Toyota Tsusho. The group also participated in the Michigan seminar hosted by JETRO Tokyo, the JAPIA Automotive Supplier Briefing in Nagoya, and a networking event in Osaka. The group joined the State of Michigan delegation, led by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer for tours of the Osaka Expo and Toyota Museum in Nagoya, and attended the

Midwest U.S.-Japan Association Conference in Tokyo.

Despite the summer heat, the trip was a great success, with many productive interactions. Special thanks to Consul General Hajime Kishimori of the Detroit Consulate who arranged special tours of the Mori Building Urban Lab and the teamLab Borderless digital art gallery.



1) The Battle Creek group meeting with Musashi in Toyohashi. 2) Team Battle Creek meeting with executives from Hi-Lex. BCU presented them with a street sign for Honorary Makoto Teraura Way, to be dedicated in 2026. 3) Mayor Mark Behnke and BCU President & CEO Joe Sobieralski enjoy some Pringles at the Osaka Expo. 4) Ken Masumoto and Consul General Hajime Kishimori with executives from Sekisui Chemical at the US Consular Residence in Osaka. 5) The Battle Creek delegation at DENSO headquarters in Kariya after meeting with North America President Tom Arakawa. 6) Team Battle Creek with Gov. Whitmer and Consul General Kishimori at the opening reception for the Midwest U.S.-Japan Association Conference. 7) BCU's Robert Corder and Ken Masumoto meeting with Etsushi Sumino from Toyota Tsusho and Yuichi Oi, formerly with Toyota Tsusho. 8) The Michigan Delegation at the Japan Pavilion at the Osaka Expo. 9) The Michigan Delegation outside the Osaka Expo.



San Francisco Latin American Cuisine Opens at Battle Creek Executive Airport

On Saturday, November 22, members of the BCU team had the pleasure of attending the ribbon cutting for San Francisco Latin American Cuisine.

Located inside WACO Aircraft Corporation and overlooking the runway at the Battle Creek Executive Airport, SF Latin Cuisine brings a unique dining experience to Battle Creek. Guests can watch the planes take off while enjoying food & drinks with a distinct Latin flavor. The restaurant will serve lunch and dinner Tuesday through Saturday, along with Sunday brunch. Their menu will feature bold flavors, cocktails, and more.

To see menu or make a reservation, visit sflatincuisine.com



The management team behind SF Latin American Cuisine at the Battle Creek Executive Airport.

Mars, cont'd from page 1

With approximately 150,000 employees, it is one of the largest privately-held companies in the country. Mars is active in a variety of business segments, including Food, Snacking & Confectionery Products, Pet Foods & Supplies, and Veterinary Care.

Mars has a long list of well-known consumer brands, including Ben's Original (formerly Uncle Ben's), Seeds of Change, Pedigree, Whiskas, and Cesar. The company's network of veterinary clinics include Banfield Pet Hospitals, BluePearl, and VCA Animal Hospitals.

With the acquisition, Kellanova's brands will join the existing Mars Snacking portfolio, which includes Snickers,

M&Ms, Twix, Skittles, Kind bars and Extra gum. According to Mars, the combined Snacking business is expected to generate around \$36 billion in annual revenues, with a portfolio that includes 9 billion-dollar brands.

Mars Snacking will continue to be headquartered in Chicago. The company has indicated that Battle Creek will remain a core location for Mars Snacking. The W.K. Kellogg Institute for Food and Nutrition Research, Kellanova's global R&D facility, with innovation kitchens, sensory labs, and packaging studios, is located in Battle Creek.

We congratulate Mars on the successful acquisition of Kellanova and look forward to continued collaboration.

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 approximately 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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Gull Lake Distilling and Uproot Market & Eatery Open Downtown

Two new businesses recently opened in downtown Battle Creek. Gull Lake Distilling, located at 80 W. Michigan Avenue, cut the ribbon on their new space on Tuesday, October 14. Then on Wednesday, November 12, Uproot Market & Eatery officially opened at 119 W. Michigan Avenue.

Gull Lake Distilling opened their original location in Galesburg in 2020. Owners Lindsay and TJ Koch, who are both teachers, liked the momentum they saw in downtown Battle Creek. The restaurant specializes in craft cocktails using their own small-batch craft spirits. The Battle Creek location is open for lunch and dinner Tuesday through Sunday. Be sure to check out their daily happy hour and lunch specials. More info is at gldistilling.com.



The Koch family cuts the ribbon on their new venue on Michigan Avenue in October.

Across the street, Uproot Market & Eatery is a member-owned food co-op, specializing in fresh, locally-sourced products. It has groceries, ready-to-eat meals, soups, and sandwiches, as well as coffee and fresh juice. It is open everyday, 8 AM to 8 PM. Visit uprootbc.com for more details.



General Manager Stacy Niemann cuts the ribbon on Uproot Market & Eatery.