



a publication of the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce

January – February 2017

welcome new members

As Needed Mow and Snow
US Staffing Agency LLC
Hot Rods and Handlebars
Whitney Electric & Plumbing
Whitney Holdings LLC
Michigan Chamber of Commerce
Craig K. Kempf Family Funeral
Homes, Shaw Chapel
Compulink Computers LLC
Integrated Health Partners
R-Tech Guys
Pleune Service Company
RCV Services LLC

our vision

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce is the premier business association whose influence, solutions, and networks drive economic growth in the Battle Creek area, enabling businesses, community and people to prosper in an ever-changing economy.

mission statement

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce will provide the best in member services and aggressive business advocacy to create a climate for employer growth and a prosperous community for all.

eye opener breakfast program

Tuesday, January 10, 2017
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

We're Talking Healthcare Options



Presented by: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Location: Kool Family Community Center

Are you looking for who to talk to about healthcare options? Have you looked into your membership benefit of being able to access Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan's plans through the Small Business Select program? Small Business Select is available exclusively to Chamber members and get more:

- Decision support tools for navigating BCBSM plan options and selecting plans
- Discounts and services to compliment a company's benefit plan
- Educational resources and guidance for businesses and their employees

Interested in learning more? If so, join us and local insurance agents who can help answer all of your questions about the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Small Business Select program. Insurance agents will be available during the Business Expo portion from 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. and after the Chamber update by President Kara Beer.

Is your business interested in joining our local insurance agents with a vendor table at the Business Expo portion of the Eye Opener Breakfast? If so, contact us today to reserve your spot and take advantage of one of your benefits of membership. Limited vendor spaces are available on a first come, first served basis.



Tuesday, January 24, 2017
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

State of the City Address with Mayor Dave Walters

Location: Lew Boyd Room, Kool Family Community Center

Join us and the community on Tuesday, January 24th, 2017 for a State of the City Address with Battle Creek's Mayor Dave Walters.



269.962.4076

Monday–Friday 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

One Riverwalk Centre, Suite 3A,
34 West Jackson Street, Battle Creek, MI 49017

BattleCreek.org



calendar of *events*

January – February

Tuesday, January 10

Eye Opener Breakfast
& Business Expo
Time: 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Presenter: Blue Cross Blue
Shield of Michigan
Kool Family Community Center

Wednesday, January 18

Thoughts, Resources & Food Series –
Thrivent Celebrates giving back
Time: 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Battle Creek Area Chamber of
Commerce: The Loft

Tuesday, January 24

State of the City Address
Time: 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Kool Family Community Center

Thursday, January 26

Java & Beer: Happy Hour Networking
Time: 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Battle Creek Area Chamber
of Commerce

Thursday, February 9

Women in Business Luncheon
Time: 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Battle Creek Area Chamber
of Commerce: The Loft

Tuesday, February 14

Eye Opener Breakfast
& Business Expo
Time: 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Presenter: Battle Creek Unlimited
Kool Family Community Center

Wednesday, February 15

Thoughts, Resources & Food Series
Presenter: Edward Jones
Time: 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Battle Creek Area Chamber
of Commerce: The Loft

Saturday, February 25

Pub & Grub Fest (*Winter Festival)
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

member anniversaries

75th Anniversary

Atlas Sales

40th Anniversary

Dickman Road Veterinary Clinic

35th Anniversary

Prebish Chiropractic Centre, PLC
Recognition, Inc.

30th Anniversary

Battle Creek Country Club

20th Anniversary

Vista Asset Management, Inc.

15th Anniversary

Geislinger Corporation

10th Anniversary

Holiday Inn Battle Creek

Roberts Properties

McCullough Family Chiropractic

5th Anniversary

First Congregational Church

Red Lobster

TRMI, Inc.

Chamber Refund & Cancellation Policy

Please visit battlecreek.org for our complete policy details.

Editorial Policy: Articles written by outside authors do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce. The position of the Chamber will be clearly stated where applicable. The Chamber reserves the right to reject advertising based on content and does not accept advertising that conflicts with the mission or position of the Chamber. The advertising of products or services in the Insight does not necessarily represent endorsement by the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce. The Insight is published bi-monthly by the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce.

Editor: Kara Beer, President

Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce Staff

Kara E. Beer – President

Andrea Allen – Sales Specialist

Billy Beers – Business Development Manager

Jennifer Blank – Accounting Manager

Kelly Gierman – Membership Sales Specialist

chamber corner

Time for Reflection



As we enter 2017, there is no better time than the present to take stock of your business and figure out how it can be improved. Take time to reflect on how you and the business have fared in 2016, and put your thinking cap on.

All those lingering issues with the business that rattle around your head late at night should come to the forefront now. In addition, what new ideas have you been thinking about but not yet implemented? Regardless of the type of business, here are five New Year's resolutions every small business owner should make.

Collect the Money You're Owed

I'm not sure there's one thing that makes a greater impact than this when it comes to kicking off your year on the right foot. Small businesses are notorious for letting their customers slack on paying what they owe. Sometimes this is because the small business simply has a poor (if any) collections process. But other times small businesses are just bashful, and people don't like to flat out ask for money. Set aside a block of time each week dedicated to getting the cash owed to you in the door. You'll see a big impact early in the year and fix any collections problem by end of the year.

Let Go of the Employee That's Bringing You Down

When you allow a "problem employee" to hang around, it depletes your confidence as a leader. Co-workers get frustrated, and dancing around the issue won't make the problem go away. Remember, it's never worth losing a good employee because a bad one pushes them out. It's a bad thing for your customers and ultimately your business. Take the New Year as an opportunity to take a good, hard look at employees in your company that may have become a problem, and act accordingly.

Fix the Follow-up Failures in Your Business

Don't let leads slip through the cracks. Set aside time to get back in contact with customers and partners to get them re-energized and re-engaged with your business. If you can create new and effective ways to follow up with your customers, you'll discover that you can sell much more to them. In addition, they will act as advocates for your business. I highly recommend that you use one of our Chamber breakfast, lunch or after hours to follow up with these customers.

Test a New Marketing Strategy Every Month

You need time and a little money to accomplish this one, but it's a great way to learn about what works in your business and what doesn't. There are tons of ways to test new marketing strategies. You could launch a customer reactivation campaign targeted at Chamber members and build on the business to business sales and increase awareness of your product or service amongst the community.

continued on p3

Time for Reflection — continued from p3

Other ideas include hosting a Chamber event in the office or online, as well as doing some testing in the Chamber newsletter to see which content generates the most leads. Utilize the Chamber eblast marketing to see which message triggers the most interest and clicks. Keep refining your messaging until you get an optimal conversation. Other ideas might be to partner with the Chamber with online advertising or a social media campaign. Over the course of the year you'll gain a lot more clarity into who's attracted to your business and who is spending money with you.

Automate What You Can

Make an effort to leverage technology to automate the mundane, daily tasks that sap your time and energy. Examples include collections, new customer welcome communications (did you know that we offer relocation package services and we do a number of email communications to keep people in the know) and lead follow up and nurture. There's opportunity for any repetitive workflow in your business to be automated, and the benefits can be huge. Dedicate yourself to investigating technology that can move you toward automation, and you'll be on your way.

Go into 2017 with the attitude that this year can be the most successful ever for you and your business. It will take plenty of hard work to make that happen, but if you resolve to take the actions I mentioned above, I'm confident that you'll get there.


President

Thursday, January 26, 2017

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Java & Beer Happy Hour Networking Event

Location: Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce: The Loft,
34 W. Jackson St., Suite 3A

Has old man winter got you down? Are you in need of some adult conversations, networking, and Happy Hour? If so, join us for our first Java & Beer Happy Hour networking event on Thursday, January 26th, 2017 from 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Take a break at the end of the day for this informal networking event to build your contact list with your Chamber peers.

If you are a member of our mug club, and your mug is here, we will have them ready for you in the afternoon. If you have your mug, be sure to bring it in and get a fill up. Not a member yet? No worries we will have them for sale as well as paper cups for you to enjoy.

See you on January 26th at the Chamber office. RSVP your attendance to Billy Beers at bbeers@battlecreek.org.



CTS Telecom, Inc. is a proud partner of the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce. We offer special discounts and free fiber installations (where available) to our fellow Chamber Members. Call or email us today for more information.



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Tuesday, February 14, 2017

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Eye Opener Breakfast & Small Business Expo

Economic Development with Joe Sobieralski

Presented by: Battle Creek Unlimited

Location: Kool Family Community Center

Come learn about what Battle Creek Unlimited is doing in 2017. New faces, new initiatives and economic development at the Fort Custer Industrial Park. President & CEO, Joe Sobieralski will discuss the activity BCU is seeing with attraction activities and will outline what the organization is doing to prepare the Fort for additional investment.

Also, February is a great month to connect and build your contact list through your Chamber network. Contact us today to reserve your businesses vendor table at the Eye Opener Breakfast which are available on a first come, first served basis. RSVP to Billy Beers at bbeers@battlecreek.org.



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Janis Clark, Director of Business Engagement at Western Michigan University, is doing what comes naturally: connecting the business community to WMU. Janis has lived here 25 years and has always been involved in giving back to our community. Besides serving as a Chamber of Commerce Ambassador for the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce, she has been an Ambassador in Kalamazoo since 2006, a Certified Tourism

Ambassador since 2010, on a United Way Community Investment panel, served on the Kalamazoo Promise's 10th Anniversary sponsorship team and volunteers for the Air Zoo, Habitat for Humanity and basically anyone else who asks. Thanks, Janis!

event highlights



The Battle Creek Walmart Supercenter concluded their 12 week remodel project by having a re-grand opening ribbon cutting! Their project impacted nearly 100% of their sales floor. A few of the improvements include, a vision center of the future, a revamped electronics department, extensive changes to our homelines area as well as significant depth and product improvements to our grocery store. Our Battle Creek Walmart Supercenter store employs nearly 300 associates and has serviced the Battle Creek area since 1994.



Kelly Gierman Joins the Staff

Join us in welcoming our new Membership Sales Specialist

In this position Kelly will be responsible for the team's success in recruiting 100+ new members in 2016-2017, member services and member benefits programs of the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce. Kelly is no stranger to the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce as she was one of our summer interns in the Summer of 2014 from Ferris State University. After graduation in 2014, Kelly served as Lead Event Manager at The Barn at Monterey Valley and is an active Professional Image Consultant with Mary Kay. Kelly officially joined the Chamber team in December 2016. *Please join us in welcoming Kelly to the Chamber team, we know that you will just love her dynamic, energetic and can do attitude.*



Ad Solutions Media & Design has joined the Battle Creek Chamber and moved their offices to the second floor of the Ermisch Travel Building in downtown Battle Creek. ASM, solely owned by Robert Paul of Battle Creek, recognized a need in the Battle Creek and surrounding markets for a knowledgeable and creative social media marketing company. In the spring of 2012 ASM was created as a full service marketing and design company specializing in social media marketing, content writing, branding, digital ad solutions, and website and app development. They work with dozens of local and national businesses with a key focus on social media marketing, management and social design. ASM is also partnering with several other agencies across the country to develop advanced SMM (social media marketing) programs and customer listening for small businesses. Additionally, they are launching a monthly subscription for training and design work for marketers. They will be expanding in Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Ann Arbor in the near future. Their key team includes Tara Kinney, Noy Smith, Vikki Bauer, Robbie Paul and Robert Paul. For more information please contact Robert at 269.579.2130 or visit adsolutionsmedia.com (new website coming) or kik9media.com.

Wednesday, January 18, 2017

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Thoughts, Resources & Food Series — Luncheon

Location: Battle Creek Area
Chamber of Commerce: The Loft

Cost: FREE to attend

Sponsor: Thrivent Financial

You're cordially invited . . .
Thrivent celebrates giving back!

Thrivent Financial and the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce celebrate giving back locally! Join us for a free lunch, fun networking, and valuable information on resources available to nonprofits and churches. Learn about Thrivent Action Teams, Choice Dollars, and other free resources to help the community, church, and organizations you're passionate about. This information session is ideal for nonprofit and church staff as well as active volunteers in nonprofits, churches and schools.

Please invite others who should know about these free resources and RSVP by January 13, 2017. Call Billy Beers at **269.962.4076** or email **bbeers@battlecreek.org**.



Wednesday, February 15, 2017

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Thoughts, Resources & Food Series — Luncheon

Location: Battle Creek Area
Chamber of Commerce: The Loft

Cost: FREE to attend

Sponsor: Edward Jones

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Preparing for Changes Impacting Retirement Accounts

The Department of Labor issued new rules that take effect April 10, 2017, which impact all retirement accounts at all financial institutions and all financial advisors offering retirement services. The rules will impact the retirement savings options for investors, specifically, brokerage-based or transactional IRAs, where you pay a commission when you buy or sell investments. Most individuals and small businesses with retirement accounts will be affected. At Edward Jones, putting the interests of our clients first has always been at the heart of our business. We are well prepared to meet the requirements of these new rules.

Please join us to learn how this Department of Labor rule will impact you. Seating is limited. Contact the Chamber at **269.962.4076** to reserve your spot, or email Billy Beers at **bbeers@battlecreek.org**.

LABOR & EMPLOYMENT LAW

getting the job done

Meet Nancy Mullett.

Nancy is an attorney in Kreis Enderle's Battle Creek office where she specializes in Labor & Employment Law, representing public and private employers on a variety of matters.

Nancy knows how to listen. And she knows how to get the job done. And at the end of the day, that's really what everyone wants.

Call Nancy at 269.966.3000.

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CEREAL CITY CONCERT BAND

Proud to support the arts in our community!

Winter Concert
"Around The World in Eighty Minutes"
Saturday, February 18, 2017
KCC Binda Theatre, 7:00 pm
Featuring Tenor Dr. Mark Wells and Trombonist Tylar Bullion

Conductor:
Darin Schmidt

www.cerealcityconcertband.org

email: cccb@cerealcityconcertband.org
CCCB is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization

michigan council for arts & cultural affairs
ac
arts council of greater kalamazoo

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member's business spotlight



Bronson Battle Creek to become Teaching Hospital

Bronson Battle Creek (BBC) has announced plans to seek designation as a teaching hospital, an effort that will expand healthcare access, aid in the recruitment of new physicians, and support economic vitality in Battle Creek. Startup funding for the BBC family medicine residency is being provided by three significant grants of \$1 million each from the Bronson Healthcare Group, Bronson Battle Creek Hospital Community Partners, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Work on the new residency has been underway for more than a year. If all goes as expected, approval will come in early 2017; recruitment for the first class will begin soon after; and training of the initial class of family physicians would begin in the summer of 2018.

Catch the Vibe! How to Achieve Happiness, Health, and Wealth in 2017

**"I can't do that." "I'm not good enough."
"I'm too busy."**

Do these excuses sound familiar? Kathryn tackles these roadblocks to success head-on in her engaging and fun program *Catch the Vibe!* With over 40 years of experience in pursuing her dreams, Kathryn teaches you how to catch the vibe and ride the wave to your success with a wealth of information that you can begin to apply to your everyday life.

- *Learn what vibration is and why it matters.*
- *Understand what integrity is and how to keep it aligned with your truth*
- *Strengthen your belief system and develop a more powerful mindset*
- *Empower yourself and others to catch the vibe!*

Call now to schedule your Free Session!

This session is conducted on the phone or skype and runs up to 30 minutes. During this session we discuss your goals and objectives and get you started on an amazing 2017! Contact us today at Kathy@energy-pathways.com, 630-567-8383, or energy-pathways.com.

CATCH
THE
Vibe!

City Concert Band's Exciting New 2017 Season!

With the receipt of a grant award of \$3,500 from the State of Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) and the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo, the Cereal City Concert Band has an exciting season in store! Our December 10th Christmas Concert featured the Edye Evans Hyde Trio, performing with the band and singing some very special Christmas music. Our February 18th Winter Concert, "Around the World in Eighty Minutes" will include music from all over the world and featuring a local tenor, Dr. Mark Wells, and a trombone solo by WMU Graduate Assistant, Tylar Bullion. Our April 29th Spring Concert, "John Williams: American Mozart" will consist of music written by legendary John Williams and will highlight a trumpet feature by Dr. Robert White, Assistant Professor of Trumpet Music at WMU. Performances will be held at Kellogg Community College Binda Theatre for the Performing Arts, 7:00 p.m. The band is conducted by Darin Schmidt, with Amanda Burdette as Assistant Conductor.

For more information about the band and how you can support us, please visit our website at www.cerealcityconcertband.org, email us at cccb@cerealcityconcertband.org, or call 269-962-2153.



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Christman Screenprint invites you to visit our showroom located at 2851 W. Dickman Rd. There you will see samples of products we can provide for advertising, employee rewards, and give-aways designed to increase your business. We offer quick turn around, and affordable pricing. Knowledgeable and friendly staff will help guide you through the decisions needed for art services necessary to create your advertising approach. It includes a full service computer aided art department.

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DISCOVER WHAT OMNI EMPLOYEES ALREADY KNOW

We're hiring and we'd love to give you the chance to experience working for the credit union that received top honors as an employer. Check out the Careers section at www.omnicommunitycu.org.



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(866)OMNI-WOW
www.omnicommunitycu.org



Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce

One Riverwalk Centre, Suite 3A
34 West Jackson Street
Battle Creek, Michigan 49017

Saturday, February 25, 2017
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Pub & Grub Fest

Gather your friends, family, coworkers and colleagues for the Chamber's fifth annual Pub & Grub Fest. There's no need to stay cooped up inside any longer this winter with this family-friendly event just around the corner. Mark your calendars and prepare your appetites for soup and/or chili tasting along with brews and hot chocolate!



Check out our Pub & Grub Fest event page on Facebook to be the first to hear about all of the exciting things taking place at the Festival this year.

SAVE THE DATE!

2017 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Your source for data and insight on Battle Creek's economy.

Thursday, January 19, 2017, 7:00 — 9:00 AM
McCamy Plaza Hotel, Branson Ballroom
50 Capital Avenue, SW

Registration & breakfast: 7:00 — 7:30 AM
Presentations will begin: 7:30 AM
No cost to attend

RSVP by January 9, 2017 to
Paula Young 269.441.1667 or
young@bcunlimited.org



Event Sponsors:



at the Battle Creek Area
Chamber of Commerce

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Contact the Chamber at **269.962.4076** for more details.