



a publication of the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce

January – March 2018

welcome new members

United States Air Force Recruiting
Battle Creek
Grand Slam Investigations
Allstate Insurance Agency —
Stephanie Rodriguez
Howling Delivery Services, LLC
LuxCare Pharmacy
Financial Education Services
L.O. Eye Care
Progressive
Communication Global

eye opener breakfast programs

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

State of the Community Address

Location: Kool Family Community Center,
Lew Boyd Room, 200 W. Michigan Avenue



We invite you to the State of the Community Address to hear from mayor, Mark Behnke, and county board chair, Derek King. Both representatives will have an opportunity to inform attendees on what was accomplished in 2017, and what's planned for 2018.

Thank you to our State of the Community sponsors who will be onsite during the Address.



Due to higher attendance, we are unable to host the Business Expo at the State of the Community Address.

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.

Tuesday, February 13, 2017

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

CTA Successes: Leveraging Program Benefits

Location: Kool Family Community Center,
Lew Boyd Room, 200 W. Michigan Avenue

Presented by:



Tourism in Calhoun County creates over 4,500 jobs and equates to more than \$290 million in economic impact in 2017. Hotels, restaurants, attractions and other businesses in our county depend on visitors. The most memorable experiences our visitors have involve the people they meet while dining in our restaurants, sightseeing throughout the county, and enjoying our unique attractions. Knowing our area and taking pride in sharing it with our visitors makes a lasting impression. Learn why YOU are the reason visitors have a wonderful experience in our community by attending February's Eye Opener Breakfast featuring the Calhoun County Certified Tourism Ambassador Program. Attending will also give you information as to how becoming a Certified Tourism Ambassador will help grow your business; and how your involvement will encourage more visitors to *Believe in Battle Creek!*

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.

Tuesday, March 13, 2017

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Siena Heights University

Location: Kool Family Community Center, Lew Boyd Room, 200 W. Michigan Avenue

Presented by:



SIENA HEIGHTS
UNIVERSITY
at Kellogg Community College

Is completing your degree on your "To Do" list for 2018? Or, are you working with a colleague who would benefit from completing their degree? Be sure to attend the Chamber's March Eye Opener Breakfast & Business Expo as Siena Heights University will present affordable and work schedule friendly educational opportunities for completing your bachelor's or master's degree. Siena Heights University has been providing bachelor and master degree programs to students for 25 years on the campus of Kellogg Community College.



UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ACCREDITED



269.962.4076 | BattleCreek.org

Monday–Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. | One Riverwalk Centre, Suite 3A, 34 West Jackson Street, Battle Creek, MI 49017

member anniversaries

40 Year Anniversary

Motor Shop Electrical
Construction Co.

35 Year Anniversary

Battle Creek Family YMCA

30 Year Anniversary

WWMT – Channel 3

25 Year Anniversary

Sunshine Toyota, Inc.

20 Year Anniversary

Ampco System Parking
NorthPointe Woods

15 Year Anniversary

Battle Creek Memorial
Park Association
Columbia Metal Services, Inc.
Dermatology & Skin Surgery Center
Fairfield Inn by Marriott
Gertsen Interstate Systems, Inc.
Parks Drugs, Inc.
Walters Plumbing Company

10 Year Anniversary

City of Springfield
Graphix 2 Go
Office Depot
Summit Building Services, LLC

5 Year Anniversary

Advia Credit Union
Firekeepers Casino and Hotel
Lakeview Square Mall
RiverRun Press, Inc.
Sheets Trucking, Inc.
State of Michigan/Veterans'
Services Division

Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce Staff

Kara E. Beer – President

Billy Beers – Director of Marketing
& Engagement

Jennifer Blank – Accounting Manager

Kelly Gierman – Events &
Member Specialist

Ryan Fleury – Administrative &
Communications Specialist

chamber corner

How Healthy is Your Business?



The health of your business is a reflection of how well you manage all aspects of your operation. Smart business owners know they can avoid problems by keeping aware of the many elements that can affect growth and success.

By conducting a regular business checkup, you can identify strengths and weaknesses. And much like your own physical, a business checkup pinpoints concerns and enables you to take preventative measures so they don't become a threat to your organization's health.

The four key aspects necessary for business health: management & operations; marketing; financial & legal; and human resources. In a healthy and sound business, these four areas are in balance.

1 MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS — When was the last time you looked at your business plan? Have your plan handy? Ask yourself and honestly answer these questions: Are you on target towards meeting your vision, mission and goals? Who is your sounding board? Do you have a strategic plan? When did you last update your written operations plan, including contingency measures? Have you updated your goals? Do you have a succession plan? What back-up measures do you have in place should your systems fail?

2 MARKETING — Promoting your business is essential for ongoing success. No matter how strong a core client group you've built, don't rely solely on them for continued business. Repeat customers have utmost value, but there may come a day when a key customer goes elsewhere. Be prepared by cultivating new contracts and sales through effective marketing. Does your marketing strategy reflect current methods of attracting business? Does your brand suit the current environment? Are you a contender in your niche market? Are you reaching the right customers and meeting their needs? Have you targeted your marketing efforts?

3 FINANCIAL & LEGAL — Keeping on top of your finances is not always the most exciting part of running a business, but it's crucial to know exactly where you stand. Start your checkup by gathering your most current set of financial statements and compare them to previous years. Identify any expenses that have become significantly higher. Check this information against your annual budgets and forecasting, and address why this is the case. What could you have done differently to save money? Any large discrepancies (positive or negative) warrant review, and a re-evaluation of your financial plan will help you get back on track. Consider the following areas: Do you have excellent bookkeeping and accounting systems? Are your financial statements in order? How is your cash flow? Do you have systems in place to prevent fraud? How good are you at collecting receivables? Is your business classification still the best fit? What are your legal responsibilities as a business owner?

4 HUMAN RESOURCES — No business runs without people power. Considered by successful business owners to be their greatest asset, the right mix of employees is invaluable to business health. For some small businesses, human resources management often takes a back seat to more pressing matters. However, the effort it takes to develop clear policies and procedures pays off the first time an employee issue arises. Consider the following: Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined? Are the right people in the right jobs? Do you have a written Human Resources policy and procedure guide? What training and personal development opportunities do you provide? How do you rate yourself as a leader and why? Does your compensation and staff recognition plan meet the current market standards? Are there any significant patterns or increases in absenteeism rates? Have you provided expert training for your management team?

Action brings results. Once you've completed your business check-up and identified challenges, make a plan and then work on it. Prioritize each new goal and get going! Much like starting a new health regime, long-lasting and effective changes tend to be those you take one step at a time and involve the development of new practices and habits.

Kara E. Beer
President



Tuesday, January 23 & Tuesday, March 27, 2018
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Java & Beer Coffee Hour

Location: Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce, Lobby

Cost: FREE

Mornings are always a struggle without a cup of coffee. That's why your Chamber president, Kara Beer, is brewing up a pot just for you! Join her and other Chamber members for the Java & Beer networking series.

Grab breakfast treats while enjoying coffee at this free event with YOUR president along with these other energizing benefits:

- Staying connected with YOUR Chamber
- Learning more about other members
- Giving members the opportunity to learn more about YOU
- The ULTIMATE ice breaker — GIANT jenga



Not a part of the Java & Beer Mug Club? The special 22 oz. beer stein will be available for purchase ahead of time by calling 269.962.4076, or at the door when you arrive.

RSVP to Kelly Gierman at kgierman@battlecreek.org or call the office at **269.962.4076**.

Tuesday, February 6, 2018

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Meet-n-Eat: Speed Networking

Cost: \$10 per member; \$20 per non-member

In this networking event, we gather 25 to 30 people at local restaurants to be surprised and inspired by one another. Sign up for lunch and we'll arrange the opportunity for you to connect with potential new clients, friends, board members and more over lunch.

RSVP to Kelly Gierman at kgierman@battlecreek.org or call the office at **269.962.4076**.



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY!

Contact the Chamber at **269.962.4076** to learn about sponsorship opportunities that will grow your business and increase your visibility within the business community.

OMNI'S BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP TEAM IS HERE TO HELP

Our team has several years of experience, and brings a lot to the table when it comes to helping members build healthy businesses.

Let our team assist you with:

- Merchant services
- Long-term investment planning
- Commercial real estate loans
- Equipment loans
- Working capital lines of credit

Looking to expand or grow your business?
Call us for a consultation!



(866) OMNI-WOW
www.omnicommunitycu.org



Federally insured
by NCUA



Equal Housing
Opportunity

event highlights



The Arc of Calhoun County The Chamber Staff, Ambassadors, Members and the community celebrated The Arc of Calhoun County's 1 year anniversary at their new location, and 63 years of advocacy and support to individuals with disabilities within our community. The Open House was from noon to 4 p.m. and was open to the public.
506 Riverside Drive, Battle Creek, MI 49015



Happy's Pizza The Chamber Staff, Ambassadors and Members celebrated with ribbon at Happy's Pizza on Friday, October 13, 2017 at 11 a.m. Happy's Pizza delivers more than just great pizza, they offer always made fresh-to-order pizza, chicken, ribs, salads, seafood and desserts! Daily \$5.99 lunch specials from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., fast delivery service, open late, and a full catering menu with pricing starting as low as \$3.00 per person. Call 269.964.4444 for excellent food and service, their slogan says it best, Eat Happy's Be Happy!
1180 W. Columbia Avenue, Battle Creek, MI 49015



Ganton Senior Communities – Heritage Assisted Living The Chamber Staff, Ambassadors, Members and the community celebrated building renovations with a ribbon cutting at Heritage Assisted Living, a Ganton Senior Community. Alongside the ribbon cutting, Heritage Assisted Living hosted an open house to highlight their building renovations and talk about assisted living.
14420 Helmer Rd S, Battle Creek, MI 49015



The Rodriguez Agency The Chamber Staff, Ambassadors and Members celebrated with Allstate — The Rodriguez Agency for their one year anniversary with a Ribbon Cutting. Allstate — The Rodriguez Agency is committed to helping Battle Creek residents assess their immediate and long-term needs to ensure protection of your home, auto, personal property, and overall financial future. For more information, call 269.288.2777, or stop by their office to get a quote today.
7055 Tower Rd, Battle Creek, MI 49014



Sweets and Meats at Lakeview Square Mall The Chamber Staff, Ambassadors and Members celebrated the Grand Opening for Sweets and Meats located in Lakeview Square Mall. Here you can choose from a variety of savory jerky flavors, barbecue sauces and marinades, as well as delectable chocolate creations. They are open from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 6 p.m. on Sundays.
5775 Beckley Rd, Battle Creek, MI 49015

4 | Visit us online at BattleCreek.org



CTS
TELECOM INC.

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.


Internet


Voice


Transport


Cloud


Colocation

269.746.4411 sales@ctstelecom.com WWW.CTSTELECOM.COM

spectacular ambassador

Jacob Miller

2017-2018 Co-Chair | Ambassador Committee



After graduating from the University of Michigan, Jacob moved to Battle Creek to open his branch here on Columbia Avenue. Jacob has been a member of the Chamber Ambassadors for 4 years, and this year will serve as a co-chair of our Ambassador Committee. When Jacob is not being a spectacular ambassador he's being a spectacular financial advisor for Edward Jones.

As an Edward Jones financial advisor, he believes it's important to invest his time to understand what you're working toward before you invest your money. It's also important to understand the level of risk you're comfortable accepting when investing so we can balance it with the steps necessary to reach your long-term goals. Whether you're planning for retirement, saving for college for children or grandchildren, or just

trying to protect the financial future of the ones you care for the most, we can work together to develop specific strategies to help you achieve your goals. We can also monitor your progress to help make sure you stay on track or determine if any adjustments need to be made. Throughout it all, we're dedicated to providing you top-notch client service. But we're not alone. Thousands of people and advanced technology support our office so we can help ensure you receive the most current and comprehensive guidance. In addition, we welcome the opportunity to work with your attorney, accountant and other trusted professionals to deliver a comprehensive strategy that leverages everyone's expertise. Working together, we can help you develop a complete, tailored strategy to help you achieve your financial goals.

Jacob is an avid sports fan, a service club member, phenomenal volunteer, and a homeowner in Battle Creek.



We've got plans to cover all of yours.

At Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network, we know your life and the things you need from your health insurer are constantly changing. That's why we're always doing more to bring you everything you need to move forward with confidence. Learn more at bcbsm.com.



GROUP HEALTH PLANS | INDIVIDUAL PLANS | DENTAL | VISION | BCBSM.COM

DOWNLOAD OUR MOBILE APP

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. 005726



Conductor: Dr. Stephen White

WINTER CONCERT
"Transformations"

Saturday, February 24, 2018
 KCC Binda Theatre, 7:00pm



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

www.cerealcityconcertband.org



Evergreen
Senior Care & Rehab Center

111 Evergreen Road, Battle Creek, MI 49015
 269-969-6110 | www.evergreenscc.com

"The Therapy Team at Evergreen not only possesses great skill and training, they have a talent for making you believe in yourself. Not only did they restore my physical health, they worked just as hard to rebuild the confidence I needed to progress." – S.S.

Featuring:

- Rehab to Home
- Physical, Occupational & Speech Therapy Services
- Long-Term Skilled Nursing
- Private Rooms Available
- Respite Care

- Admissions 24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a week
- Cable & Wi-Fi



Come tour today!

member's business spotlight

Brass Band of Battle Creek

BBBC is the proud **2017 Civic Award Winner** for "The Arts" on behalf of the Kalamazoo (MI) Chapter of the Links, Incorporated.



Established in 1946, The Links, Incorporated is a premier international, non-profit volunteer service organization. Built upon a legacy of friends and providing service that changes lives, the organization is committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the cultural and economic survival of African Americans.

Impact Solutions

Standard Printing and Office Supply of Marshall, MI was recently **rebranded to Impact Solutions**. Impact Solutions, headquartered in Lansing, MI, purchased SPOS in March, 2015. As a provider of Brand Support Services, Impact Solutions helps organizations communicate and maintain their brand by developing solutions utilizing print, promotional products, corporate apparel, signage plus displays as well as design, technology, and fulfillment services. Impact Solutions commitment to its customers is exemplified by their personalized services, state of the art technology, and facility investments. As the bridge between the client and its customers, or any audience they are targeting, Impact Solutions ensures the right connection is made.

Financial Education Services



Who do you know with less than perfect credit? Who do you know that's not prepared for life's uncertainties? Who do you know without a financial plan for the future? Who do you know that is not protected against identity theft? Financial Education Services provides you with an Agent, Jacqueline Garrison, as your personal rep to take care of all your needs. Positioned in Battle Creek, Michigan, but providing services all across the United States. Our products includes: Credit Restoration, Credit Attorney, Will, Trust, POA, Travel, Debt Zero, Smart Credit, Financial Lock-box, Positive Credit Builder, Life Lock, RX Discount Card and a Shopping Portal.

Financial Education Services donates \$2 from every FES Protection Plan payment to the Youth Financial Literacy Foundation. As a member, you'll not only gain financial benefits for yourself, but participate in creating a financially prepared future for today's youth.

We are proud to honor our services in Battle Creek, Michigan. See how we do it at www.united-credit.org and call **Jackee at 269.967.0678** to schedule an appointment!

CPCU Promotes Diann Vaden



CPCU has promoted **Diann Vaden** to the Loan Clerk position in their Battle Creek Capital Avenue branch. Diann's knowledge of deposit and loan products coupled with her commitment to exceeding member expectations made her the perfect fit for the job.

Humanergy welcomes Corey Fernandez



Humanergy is excited to welcome **Corey Fernandez**, a seasoned executive coach and leadership development facilitator. He's joined us on the mission to ignite leadership potential and inspire a passionate commitment to making a real difference in the world.

Corey's always up for a challenge, whether he's facilitating a complex strategy session or on an 80-day expedition with the National Outdoor Leadership School. Read more about him at <http://humanergy.com/home/about/our-team>.

Budget Blinds

Budget Blinds is happy to be a part of the Battle Creek community! While we may be relatively new to the area, Budget Blinds has actually been in business for



25 years and is the largest window coverings franchise in North America. In addition to servicing the window treatment needs of residential customers, Budget Blinds also has a Commercial Division that works with many industries including, health care, government, hotel and hospitality among others. In home consultations are free so schedule an appointment today and call **Andrea Newton at 269.841.4184**.

Battle Creek Area Association of Realtors

The Battle Creek Area Association of REALTORS® Public Relations Committee strives to provide the public with



information about our current housing market, and to be involved in community organizations. The PR Committee established a grant fund program in 2005 that serves Calhoun County residents in the areas of housing, families, children, and community enhancements. BCAAR's PR Committees have given over \$93,500 back to the community through its grant program since its inception. To apply visit bcaar.com.

LifeCare Ambulance Celebrates Their Employees

5 years of Service: Darrell Camp, Larry Camp, Logan Connell, DeEtte English,



Jaime Goodman, Aaron Hartle, JoDawna McDonald, Ryan Wright, Kathleen Arthur, Kirk Schaaf. *10 years of Service:* Jennifer Hammond, Thomas Stainbrook. *15 years of Service:* Kimberly Vanvorst. *20 years of Service:* Peggy Bell, Ron Downs. *Board of Directors Years of Service:* Shawnette Spicer. *Platinum Attendance Award:* Michael Spencer, Jason Schuitema, Kevin Swank, Jason Taylor, Kim Vanvorst, Doris Williams. *Personal Growth Award:* Cathy Knox. *Transportation Specialist of the Year:* Brian Keeton. *Customer Service Award:* Janice Honeycutt. *Customer Satisfaction:* Janelle Fluty, Michael Freeburn, Joshua Smith. *Clinician/ Medical Skills Award:* Jason Schuitema. *Dispatch Award:* Cathy Knox. *Significant Sacrifice Recognition:* Mitchell Dickert, Mark Gysel, Michael Mouton, Kevin Swank, Allen Williamson, Matt Wilson. *Co-Worker of the Year:* Kevin Swank. *Distinguished Service Award Recipient:* Mitchell Dickert. *Star of Life:* Bridgett Dickert. *Support Star of Life:* Karen Galbreath.



rap with your reps

On Friday, December 1, 2017, the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce brought back Rap with Your Reps, an event providing business owners and members of the community an opportunity to express their questions, comments and concerns about what's happening within our city, and how it directly and indirectly affects businesses. Friday's forum included over 20 local, state and federal lawmakers and community members which focused on date, time and location of future meetings; and what current issues and topics to be addressed within the 2017–2018 program schedule. Rap with Your Reps is held quarterly highlighting 2 to 4 current issues. This past Friday, current issues discussed as potential topics for future Rap with Your Reps forums included:

- Roads & Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- New Business Start-Ups
- Government 101
- Housing — Buying, Renting and Seniors
- Property Tax/Foreclosures
- Collaboration of Large & Small Businesses
- Education (Public & Charter Schools)
- Register Bids & Contracts — City & County
- Changing our Communities Narrative
- Local Media
- Local Impact & Influence of Hospitals
- Medical & Recreational Marijuana Legalization

Allow your voice to be heard by participating in **February's Rap with Your Reps forum featuring Economic Development**. The discussion will take place on Friday, February 2nd, 2018 in Room 301, City Commission Chambers, with the City of Battle Creek located at 10 N. Division St. from 7:30 – 9 a.m. Email Kara Beer at kbeer@battlecreek.org to RSVP, or for more information.

Ask us about our
Quick Equity Loans!
Go to CPCU.CO today.

**CONSUMERS PROFESSIONAL
CREDIT UNION**

NMLS# 446632

calendar of *events* January – March

Tuesday, January 9 State of the Community Address	Friday, February 16 Ambassador Committee Meeting
Friday, January 12 Women in Business Luncheon	Monday, February 19 Leadership Battle Creek
Monday, January 15 Leadership Battle Creek	Wednesday, February 21 Silent Observer Committee
Wednesday, January 17 Silent Observer Committee	Wednesday, February 28 Military Affairs Committee
Friday, January 19 Ambassador Committee Meeting	Thursday, March 1 5:00 Dash
Tuesday, January 23 Java & Beer Coffee Hour	Friday, March 9 Women in Business Luncheon
Wednesday, January 24 Military Affairs Committee	Tuesday, March 13 Eye Opener Breakfast & Business Expo
Thursday, January 25 5:00 Dash	Friday, March 16 Ambassador Committee Meeting
Friday, February 2 Rap with Your Reps	Monday, March 19 Leadership Battle Creek
Tuesday, February 6 Meet-n-Eat Speed Networking	Wednesday, March 21 Silent Observer Committee
Friday, February 9 Women in Business Luncheon	Tuesday, March 27 Java & Beer Coffee Hour
Tuesday, February 13 Eye Opener Breakfast & Business Expo	Wednesday, March 28 Military Affairs Committee



Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce

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



12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Women in Business Luncheon

Location: Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce: The Loft
(location may change based on space)

Cost: Pre-register \$10; At the Door \$20

January 12, February 9, March 9, 2018

Are you a woman in business? Want to network with other women in business? More and more research from around the world is showing beyond doubt that gender equality is good for everyone — for women and men, boys and girls, for communities, businesses and economies. Women’s participation and presence in the labor market is an increasingly significant driver of economic development. When women earn money, it creates a ripple effect and the community thrives around them. Help create the “ripple” effect here in our own community by joining other women as they participate in January’s Women in Business luncheon.

RSVP to Kelly Gierman at kgierman@battlecreek.org or call the office at **269.962.4076**.

5:00 Dash - - Networking within 60 Minutes

Thursday, January 25, 2018
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

5:00 Dash

Location: TownePlace Suites

Cost: FREE



The new TownePlace Suites by Marriott in Battle Creek is excited to kick off the New Year by hosting January’s 5:00 Dash. This is one you certainly won’t want to miss! As the newest hotel in the Battle Creek Area, TownePlace Suites is an extended-stay hotel offering the comfort, flexibility, and affordability you require. To honor and celebrate their Grand Opening, we will be observing their Ribbon Cutting in addition to the networking event. Join us in the celebration on Thursday, January 25 at 5:00 p.m.

RSVP to Kelly Gierman at kgierman@battlecreek.org or call the office at **269.962.4076**.

Thursday, March 1, 2018
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

5:00 Dash

Location: Omni Community Credit Union,
220 E Roosevelt Ave, Battle Creek, MI 49015

Cost: FREE



OMNI CCU Roosevelt Branch to Celebrate Grand Re-opening

OMNI Community Credit Union will be celebrating the re-opening of its Roosevelt Branch on March 1.

While still open to the public and fully operational, the branch has been under renovation for the past few months to optimize the space and provide a better member experience. The Ribbon Cutting ceremony will be held at 5:00 p.m. with local Chamber members, staff and leadership, including OMNI CEO Ted Parsons.

OMNI is currently the only financial institution serving this area of the Battle Creek community. The credit union is heavily invested in the community and offers support to local non-profits, including the Battle Creek Community Foundation, founder of the “Believe in Battle Creek” initiative.

RSVP to Kelly Gierman at kgierman@battlecreek.org or call the office at **269.962.4076**.