



Mason County, Michigan

Monthly Update: January 2017



UACJ Automotive to Expand in Pere Marquette Township

Last week, UACJ Automotive Whitehall Industries, Inc. announced plans to expand their operations in Pere Marquette Township's 6th Street Industrial Park. The proposed expansion project includes a 35,200 square foot addition onto their current aluminum extrusion facility, as well as the purchase of an additional 29 acres to erect a 110,000 square foot facility. In total, the company plans to invest \$29 million in the expansion project, creating 128 new jobs over the next three years.

UACJ's expansion will also benefit from a handful of local and state incentives. For their part, the MEDC will be supporting the project in the form

or a \$640,000 Business Development Grant. At the local level, Pere Marquette Township intends to assist by offering UACJ a multi-year property tax abatement. Michigan Works also plans to provide assistance in the arena of workforce attraction and training.

UACJ is an industry leader in the manufacturing of aluminum extruded parts for the automotive industry. In 2016, the company was acquired by UACJ Group, a global aluminum products manufacturer based in Tokyo, Japan.



Business & Education Leaders Discuss "Skills 4 Success"

On Friday, January 13th, the Mason County Talent 2025 Steering Committee hosted a group of leaders from education and business at West Shore Community College for a Business & Education Summit. The keynote speakers at this summit included Jason Pasatta of Ottawa Area Intermediate School District and Alison Freas of Herman Miller, who presented on a handful of the initiatives that are currently underway in Ottawa County geared toward exposing students to local career opportunities while also educating students about the skills that employers are looking for in job seekers. In particular, Pasatta and Freas focused on the [Skills 4 Success](#) framework, an assessment tool design to help students recognize and improve upon critical soft skills required in the workplace, and discussed how this framework fits within their work-based learning programming, known as

[Future PREP'd](#). Follow the links for more information on these programs.

As employers are increasingly stressing the importance of work-readiness, and educators are exploring different avenues for imparting employability skills to their students, the goal of this summit was to introduce the Skills 4 Success and Future PREP'd concepts as recognized best practices in the field, and explore opportunities for replicating some form of this program right here in Mason County. As the concepts were well received by local leadership in both business and education, the Mason County Talent 2025 group will continue to investigate opportunities for coordinating the implementation of this sort of programming in the coming months and years



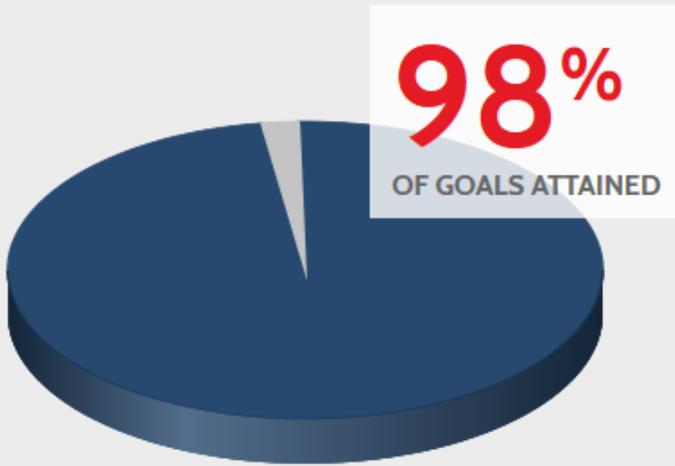
Leaders in Economic Alliance Development Moving Forward in 2017

With the preliminary phase of the four-county economic development planning process known as LEAD (Leaders in Economic Alliance Development) drawing to a close this past December, the multi-county collaborative is poised to hit the ground running in 2017. Over the course of the past six months, the four-county collective, which includes Lake, Mason, Newaygo, and Oceana counties, identified three strategic arenas for collaboration: Workforce Development, Broadband Access, and Regional Trails Development. The collective has outlined specific goals in each of these priority areas, and committees have been formed around each in order to work towards the accomplishment of these goals.

Committee meetings are slated to begin in the first part of 2017. For more information on the LEAD initiative, or to learn how you can be involved, contact Spence Riggs with the Mason County Growth Alliance at spencer@ludington.org or 231-845-6646.

Work Ready Community Progress Tracker

MASON COUNTY



Workforce	Goals	Actual NCRC
Emerging	128	210
Current	45	89
Transitioning	282	273
Totals	455	572
Workforce category not identified		0
Total NCRC		572

	Goals	Actual
Employers Supporting ①	38	39 ①

Timeline for completing goals is September 22, 2014 to on or before September 21, 2016

About the Mason County Growth Alliance:

The Mason County Growth Alliance was created in 2006 to support economic growth and community development in Mason County. Its mission is to nurture a more dynamic economy to support a vibrant quality of life in the community. The Growth Alliance believes its efforts must be devoted to building on its business base, encouraging entrepreneurship, and capitalizing on the local community assets.



Mason County Growth Alliance

spencer@ludington.org | 231-845-6646 | masoncountygrowth.org

See what's happening on our social sites:



