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January 2019



## Feature: GDK Construction and Geenen DeKock Properties Expand Downtown Holland



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# Letter from Jane Clark

President, Michigan West Coast  
Chamber of Commerce



Let's talk about setting goals. It's likely that someone has asked you about your resolutions for the new year, and without a doubt, resolving to maximize your Chamber membership should be high on your list. We make it our business to help our members succeed, and we've got the tools to make that happen for your business.

At the Chamber, we follow EOS (the Entrepreneurial Operating System), which leans heavily on the practice of setting goals and tracking progress on a regular basis. It teaches a disciplined process of starting with the large long-term goals and working backwards towards the small short term "rocks," thus turning hefty goals into manageable tasks. Do your goals involve expanding your network of clients, customers or colleagues? Start by putting some networking events on your calendar. Do you need assistance tackling public policy issues that affect your business? Come take a seat at one of our Advocacy in Action events and connect with elected officials. Need help getting your team organized? Come talk to us about EOS!

At this time of year, I invite you to set aside time from working *IN* your business to working *ON* your business and exploring how the Chamber can help you reach your goals. Get online and look at our website or call our office and schedule a consultation. It's our resolution to make sure you are getting the most out of your membership, and we invite you to make your membership a goal for 2019 as well.

Best Regards,  
Jane Clark

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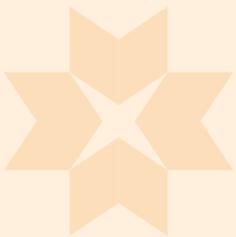
Feature:

# GDK Construction and Geenen DeKock Properties Expand Downtown Holland

By Chelsea Scott | Photography by Photo Op Studio



**Doug DeKock**



In the mid-1980s, Doug DeKock was a former practicing CPA and Chuck Geenen had been working with computers to help streamline and automate the building industry. The two teamed up with Chuck's father Ade to form a commercial construction company. Through this partnership, GDK Construction and sister company Geenen DeKock Properties were formed. GDK is a commercial construction company and Geenen DeKock is a real estate investment/development and property management company\*.

Geenen DeKock Properties began developing shopping centers and other commercial property in West Michigan with GDK Construction serving as construction manager and general contractor. Together, the companies completed many construction projects in a variety of categories including churches, industrial and manufacturing facilities, schools, offices, and retail. "During this building and development boom, GDK earned a solid reputation with the finest area subcontractors," said owners Doug DeKock and Chuck Geenen. "We maintain these relationships today which is very beneficial as we are currently in the midst of another building and development boom."

The boom is apparent to residents who've witnessed new structures crop up and older ones getting some much needed TLC. "For several years, our team has had a vision of expanding Holland's nationally recognized downtown further toward Lake Macatawa," Doug said. "Currently that vision is becoming reality as GDK is working toward expanding downtown Holland's 'main street' and its offerings." The massive project began in 2014 with property acquisition. "We have come a long way and by the end of 2019 (five years from start), we will have completed the Parking Deck, 50 West Residences, The Lofts at West 8th, Canterbury Cottage, Tulip Time, The

Sentinel renovation, Hop Cat, the Sperry Theater, Cakabakery, Hawthore Collection, other retail suites, 67 apartments and five condominiums," Doug and Chuck said. Still to come is the development of the corner of Pine and 8th Street and the corner of Pine and 9th Street. They added, "We are dreaming about those projects now and if those projects can be completed within the next five years we would be delighted."

When asked what the involvement of GDK in the Holland expansion means to them, Doug and Chuck agreed it has been extremely rewarding to work on such a transformative project in their own hometown. "We are excited that this project, together with the renovation of the Civic Center, has brought us significantly closer to uniting downtown with the waterfront," they said. "The march to the waterfront continues!"

A discussion of the Holland expansion project can't be had without mentioning Project Manager Jim Hoekstra. Having been with GDK for 27 years, he has managed several award winning projects including work at Holland Christian Schools, Macatawa Bank, and local churches (he is currently overseeing the renovation and addition at Pillar Church, the oldest building in Holland. He and his wife are members). "Jim is overseeing a large part of the 8th Street development," Doug and Chuck explained. "His knowledge and foresight have helped us to lay out the best use for this block."

There truly couldn't be better stewards of downtown Holland's expansion project, as both Doug and Chuck have a genuine love and passion for not just their hometown but the business as well. "As a former CPA, I worked with a client in real estate development and fell in love with the business. I started my own development business with a couple of partners and then

connected with Chuck, the best partner anyone could ask for,” Doug shared. Chuck added, “For me, it was the love of building projects that brought me into this line of work. I was always fascinated by seeing a vision and some brick and mortar turn into a building with a purpose. I feel blessed that my father shared this passion and that we were able to start this business together and to partner with Doug. Doug and I complement each other’s strengths so well.”

While GDK has been honored and grateful to receive awards from organizations like ABC (Associated Builders & Contractors), Doug and Chuck noted that most of their satisfaction comes from seeing people use and enjoy the buildings they complete. “For example, it was such an honor to help breathe new life into the iconic Holland Civic Center. After the recent ribbon cutting ceremony, it was amazing to watch the people in our community walk in and recognize the place that memories were made in and see the future for events that would not have been possible prior to the renovations,” Chuck said. “No trophy or plaque can capture that.” Doug added, “Although when the West Coast Chamber surprised us by showing up during the Olympics and presented us with the Think Big Be Great award, they kind of hit the nail on the head. We strive to think big by anticipating future needs. We encourage everyone we work with both inside and outside of our companies to do the same. Together, the results are great!”

More than any one project or accolade, Doug and Chuck most value their team. Since much of the staff have worked there a long time (like Project Management Assistant Lisa Knoll who has been there for over 25 years and Jody Myaard who has worked there 35 years!) the feeling around the watercooler is more like family than co-workers. “We really don’t like to throw the word ‘proud’ around, but we are really proud of our GDK team,” Doug and Chuck agreed. “Most of our employees have been with us for at least a decade; it is very rare that an employee leaves the company.” Birthdays, anniversaries and other life milestones are not just the joy of one individual, but that of the entire team. The workforce bonds regularly with employee lunches. “While these often tie in with other things like safety meetings, we take time to stop talking shop for a bit and just

gather and catch up with each other,” Doug explained. “These lunches and our annual Christmas dinner are great opportunities to come together, have fun, and catch up.”

“Working with people that are like family keeps me grounded and reminds me daily of what is truly important,” Chuck said. “In this business, there is always a lot of work to do and if someone can’t be at work, we all pitch in to help.” Doug echoed Chuck’s sentiment: “I love what I do, I love going to work every day, and I love the people I work with. It doesn’t get any better than that.”

The family feeling extends to the community as well, with GDK encouraging employees to actively give back and support causes near to their hearts. GDK walks the walk too, of course. “We sponsor or help to sponsor several yearly community events, runs, etc.” said Chuck. “Many of us are involved in various civic and charitable organizations. We love this community and love to be involved in it.”

The legacy of GDK will live on in the buildings in our area they have built or renovated and will be carried forward by new faces. “My son, Chad, came into the business about six years ago as did Doug’s daughter, Andrea,” Chuck said. “Each has helped the business grow in new and exciting ways.” New and exciting. That’s GDK. A tightknit business with an “everyone’s family” feel that is committed to creating and transforming buildings that will enhance the communities in which they live and work. Even as work continues on current projects, sights are set on what is next. “Together with our team, we are always looking towards the future and working and strategizing to plan and develop facilities to meet these needs,” said Chuck. Doug added, “That’s my favorite part. Dreaming about the next project.”

*\*Where “GDK” alone is used in this article, it is in reference to both GDK Construction and Geenen DeKock Properties.*

*GDK Construction and Geenen DeKock Properties is located in downtown Holland at 12 West 8th Street, Suite 250. More information can be found at [www.gdkconstruction.com](http://www.gdkconstruction.com) and [www.gdkproperties.com](http://www.gdkproperties.com).*



**Chuck Geenen**



**Jim Hoekstra**



# What Business Leaders Need to Know About the Flu

Courtesy of Business Health Solutions – Mercy Health

*It happens every year beginning in October and lasting through May.*

*It peaks between February and March.*

*It is one of the top 10 causes of death in the United States.*

*It resulted in 49 million illnesses in the U.S. last year.*

The flu season brings misery, missed work, reduced productivity and increased medical expenses to individuals and businesses alike. And because it is an illness that is easily spread from person to person, it can



have a significant negative impact on the workplace.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health\*, "The annual direct costs, such as hospital and

doctor's office visits, and medications, of influenza (flu) in the United States are an estimated **\$4.6 billion**. The flu causes U.S. employees to miss approximately **17 million workdays** due to flu, at an estimated **\$7 billion** a year in sick days and lost productivity."

### Be Aware of How It Spreads

People with flu can spread it to others who are up to six feet away. Most experts think that flu viruses spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Less often, a

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person might get flu by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then touches their own nose, mouth or eyes.

People with flu are most contagious in the first three to four days *after* their illness begins. Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to seven days after becoming sick.

If an employee is ill, encourage that person to go home and call the doctor, take any medications he or she may be prescribed and wait to return to work at least 24 hours *after a fever has ended*.

### Measures You Can Take

Vaccinate. Vaccinate. Vaccinate.

Flu clinics at the workplace are common these days among larger employers, and for good reason. According to data from 2016, 80 percent of children who died from the flu **did not have** the flu vaccination. Adults can die of complications from the flu as well. Encourage all of your employees and their families to get the flu shot.

While flu shots may not be perfect, when it comes to targeting the strains most active in a community during a particular season, they can reduce an individual's risk of getting the flu and of being hospitalized by 40-60 percent.

Be sure to have plenty of hand sanitizer throughout your workplace for your employees, and select one that has 60 percent alcohol to help kill the flu virus.

You can also post reminders for workers



regarding proper hand and respiratory hygiene practices—including to avoid touching one's eyes, nose or mouth. Work to ensure that your cleaning crew is using products that sanitize surfaces and that they thoroughly clean both soft and hard surfaces.

Another active measure you can take is to dispel myths about the flu. For example, many people think that the vaccine injects a live virus into the person. Most flu vaccines consist of inactivated/dead virus that cannot transmit infection. *The flu vaccine does not give a person the flu.*

Another myth is that antibiotics can help "cure" the flu. Influenza is a respiratory virus, and *antibiotics do not affect viruses*. However, new antiviral medications have been developed that can impact the length of the illness if taken within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms.

### Look for Symptoms

The onset of the flu tends to be abrupt and can include a myriad of symptoms, including the following:

- High fever
- Chills alternated with sweating
- Chest discomfort and cough
- Severe headache
- Sore throat (uncommon)
- Severe body aches and muscle pain
- Exhaustion

If an employee seems to be coming down with the flu at work, send the person home, and encourage your employee to remain there *until 24 hours after a fever has ended*.

The CDC estimates that there were **79,000 influenza-related deaths, and 959,000 hospitalizations in the U.S.** during the 2017-2018 flu season. Maintaining a healthy workforce is your best protection for your business, and to do that, you need to immunize your employees. It's an affordable way to safeguard your most valuable resource—your workers.

**\*CDC.** *The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), "Influenza (Flu) in the Workplace."*

*Mercy Health, a regional health ministry of Trinity Health, is a regional partnership of hospitals and health care providers throughout Western Michigan. As one of the largest health systems in the region, Mercy Health is a multi-campus health care provider with 700 hospital beds and over 8,600 total employees, including 400 physicians and nearly 3,000 frontline workers. Visit them online [www.mercyhealth.com](http://www.mercyhealth.com).*



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# Influential or Invasive?



By Rob Stam, Navigate

You know those scenes from almost every movie that involves aliens or dinosaurs—the one where someone is hiding behind a wall hoping the creature doesn't sense they're there? Sometimes I feel that way when I open my inbox, or check voicemail, or logon to a social media account, or go online. We are constantly getting "attacked" by people selling us stuff. We are prey like humans in a *Jurassic Park* movie.

If you run a business not only are you a consumer who's getting bombarded with that stuff, you're also being hammered from people telling you that you should be doing it to your customers. I receive at least one message a day from someone promising better SEO and google rankings, or more effective email blasts and text campaigns, or telling me on how they can maximize my social media presence. Not to mention there are still the magazines, coupon fliers, billboards, direct mailers, radio stations, and TV channels that are out there trying to get our ad dollars. Oh yeah, and let's not forget the sponsorships, tee ball teams, school fundraisers, community events, and golf outings that we're asked to be a part of every year.

Is there really a silver bullet? Can anyone really tell us what's going to work and what's not?

In theory it can all work at some level, but only if you take a step back and ask yourself this question: Do you want to be

invasive or influential?

What great marketing really is, is leadership. It's influence. Great leaders meet people where they are and take them where they need to go. A common failure in aspiring leaders is to have a great vision but an inability to get people on board. Great leaders take us on a journey, they don't just tell us where we should be. The same is true in any business: great products and ideas don't always have customers.

Marketing is leadership because when done right, marketing is influential.

For marketing to be effective you have to do more than tell a great story or "blast" people with emails. You have to be strategic. You have to map a course for your audience. Do you really know who they are? What matters to them? How they communicate?

A couple things to keep in mind as you think through your marketing for 2019:

**Doing nothing doesn't work.**

As Henry Ford said, "Stopping advertising to save money is like stopping your clock to save time." Just make sure the methods you use are consistent with the preferences of your audiences.

**Second, "story" isn't everything.**

Every marketing person, myself included, talks about the power of story. There is truth behind that but it's not the secret. Great story demands great strategy. Every decision

we make is based on value. So before telling a story, do you know what your customers value? Or, do you only know what you want them to buy?

**Third, more is not better.**

While there are some tried and true metrics that show correlations between "brand touch points" and customer conversion, the game has changed. Our lives are invaded with more advertising today than ever before. If you're focused on quantity, you're just part of the noise. Have you been

told you need to send a weekly email? Who told you that? And did they tell you why? Dig deeper.

Here's to an influential and profitable 2019!

*Rob is the President of Navigate and author of The Entrepreneur's Survival Guide. For more information and contact information visit [www.robstam.com](http://www.robstam.com).*

*Cheers to what  
your business can  
become in 2019.*



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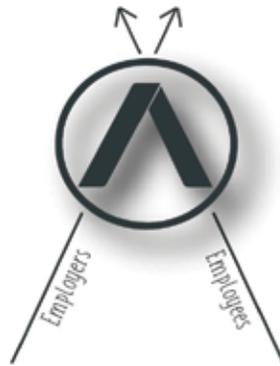


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# The Greatest Thing

By Casey Veersma, Town & Country Group



I started down this electrical career path 23 years ago. I didn't know anything about it. Like...ANYTHING! The owner took a chance on a kid with zero experience and some decent work ethic. It was an exciting time for me, this was a career move not just a job. It was all spelled out for me at the interview, four years of training and education before you can take your test to become a Journeyman Electrician. "Four years," I thought, "No problem! I'm gonna give this my best shot." So I did. There were plenty of ups and downs along the way. Each victory and failure taught me something about myself and the company I work for.

At the end of my four years I had a Journeyman's License, an Apprentice to train, and a long list of jobs to get done. I had achieved my goals. There is a tremendous amount of satisfaction that comes with that.

Those first four years it was all about me. I need to do better, I need to work harder, I need to learn faster. I was driven to succeed. I, I, I...

One afternoon all of the employees at Town & Country Group met at the shop for a cookout to celebrate 30 years in business. Each employee was given a gift that day. A book, *The Purpose Driven Life* a great read by the way. It totally changed my perspective on my work. Before reading this book, I was installing lights, switches and outlets in your homes making my dreams come true. I failed to realize I was making someone else's dream come true too. Reading this book changed my perspective on everything!

Walking through a brand new house under construction with the customer laying out their lighting from my point of view may simply look like a Tuesday morning.

For the customer, this is huge! These decisions could be the final touches on their dream home. People don't build houses every day. The excitement, anxiety, fear, and of course money to build is a big deal. This is like a wedding day to them. And they invited me. What an HONOR!

This new perspective changes everything. That job we're doing is now an event. It's fun and rewarding! The days go by fast and the customers notice right away when you are fully invested in their dream.

I had a great job when I first started at Town & Country Group. Then I found the greatest job. I didn't have leave a company to do it. I had to look past myself and see the purpose in what we do day to day. That's when the ordinary becomes extraordinary!

If you're reading this, odds are you're at a good job, too. Have you stepped back from your day to day to see the big picture? How many families are being fed and clothed because of what you do? How many careers are being

built because of what you do? How many people are healthier and safer because of what you do? How many customers are living out their dreams because of what you do?!

A great career allows you to grow and reach your potential.

Realizing that how you do your job can allow others to grow, reach their potential, and possibly see their dreams realized is truly The Greatest Thing!

*Casey Veersma, is our Residential Electrical Supervisor and our Safety Director, helping our TEAM ensure we go home each night well and safe. If you need assistance in your home or business please call Town & Country Group and 616-772-6746 or visit us at [www.tcgroupinc.com](http://www.tcgroupinc.com).*



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# Employers: 2019 is Here! Be Mindful of These Important Deadlines



By Kim Mitchell

**A**s we settle into 2019, now is a good time for employers to consider annual compliance deadlines for their health and welfare benefit plans. Below are key reporting and disclosure events and details you need to remember.

### January 31

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires employers to report the cost of employer-provided health coverage on their employees' Forms W-2. Employers who are subject to this requirement should furnish W-2s to their employees by January 31.

### February 28

ACA Section 6055 requires providers of minimum essential coverage (MEC) (such as employers with self-insured health plans) to report to the IRS and to individuals on Forms 1094-B and 1095-B information about the coverage provided during the previous year. Section 6056 requires applicable large employers (ALEs) (generally employers with 50 or more full-time employees) to report to the IRS and employees on Forms 1094-C and 1095-C information relating to the health coverage they offer (or don't offer) to their full-time employees. The forms must be filed with the IRS by February 28 (April 1, if filing electronically).

### March 4

Forms 1095-B and 1095-C must be delivered to employees and other individuals by March 4. This is an extension of the original January 31 deadline. Although the IRS is encouraging reporting entities to furnish the statements as soon as possible, it determined that some may need

additional time to gather and analyze information to prepare the forms.

### March 31

Employer-sponsored group health plans providing prescription drug coverage to Medicare Part D-eligible individuals must make an annual disclosure to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) indicating whether the coverage is creditable or non-creditable. This online disclosure is due within 60 days after the beginning of the plan year, or March 31 for calendar year plans.

### July 31

The ACA imposes a fee on health insurers and plan sponsors of self-insured group health plans to help fund the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). The insurer pays the fee for insured health plans; the plan sponsor pays the fee for self-insured plans. For plan years ending on or after October 1, 2018, but before October 1, 2019, the amount used to calculate the PCORI fee is \$2.45 per covered life. The fee is due by July 31.

### July 31

For health and welfare plans that are subject to the Form 5500 filing requirement, plan administrators must file the Form by the last day of the seventh month following the end of the plan year (unless an extension has been given). For calendar year plans, the Form 5500 is due by July 31.

### September 30

Plans subject to the Form 5500 requirement must also provide a summary annual report (SAR)

to plan participants regarding the financial condition of the plan. The SAR must generally be furnished to participants within nine months after the end of the plan year, or September 30 for calendar year plans.

### October 14

Group health plans that provide prescription drug coverage to Medicare Part D-eligible individuals must disclose to participants whether the coverage is creditable or non-creditable. The disclosure is due before the start of Medicare's open enrollment period, which begins October 15.

*Kim is an attorney in Smith Haughey's Holland office, practicing in the areas of employee benefits and employment law. Kim counsels clients on the design and maintenance of their self-insured and insured health plans, cafeteria plans, wellness programs, and health reimbursement arrangements.*

*The contents of this article are intended to convey general information only and not to provide legal advice or opinions.*

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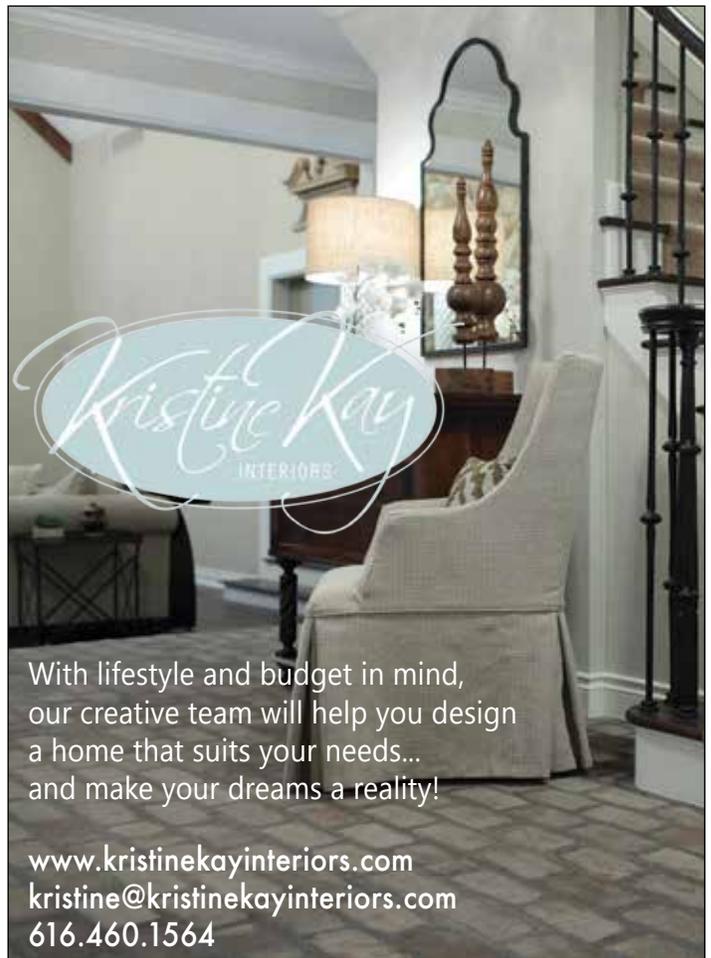
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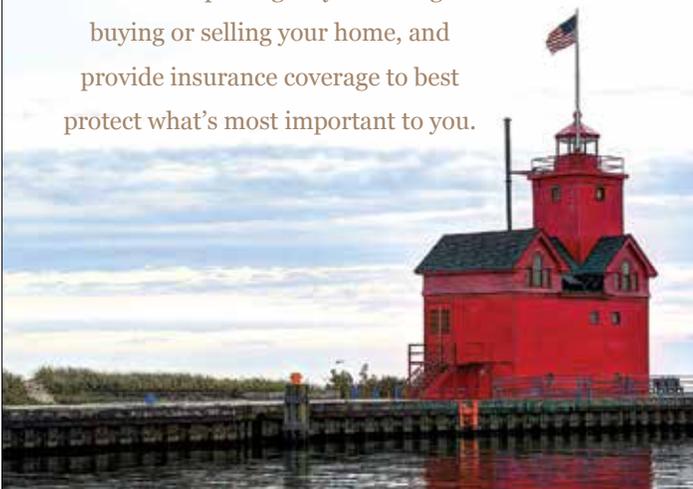
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# An Inside Look at the Quality Behind Quality Carwash

By Caroline Monahan

As is tradition, the 2018 West Coast Chamber Small Business Person of the Year was announced at our November Wake Up West Coast breakfast. This year's recipient is Mandi Brower, CEO of Quality Car Wash. Here's a look at what makes Quality and Mandi ring with quality.

Only 30% of family business survive to the 2nd generation and only 12% to 3rd. CEO Mandi Brower is the 3rd generation for her family, and is proud to say that their family-owned business is not only surviving, they are Thriving. Mandi shared, "Started by my Grandfather and Great Uncle 50 years ago, Quality Car Washes operates under many of the same principles that they put in place in 1969."

Quality puts an emphasis on its people, and investing in leadership development has paid off. The company has an amazing 89.6% retention rate of team members, many of whom have been with them for ten years and have been promoted to leadership positions. The attention to detail starts with the interactions with customers and continues up the ladder from there. Growth opportunities for the direct leadership teams are wide ranging and include the West Coast Leadership program.

Mandi Brower models leadership for her team, investing her time in her own leadership development as well as in serving as a leader in the community. Mandi is currently serving her 2nd year on the West Coast Chamber Board and is helping to pilot the Family-Owned



Business Affinity Group. Said Mandi, "As long as I can remember we have always been part of the Chamber. I can tell you with working in different cities around the US, Holland/Zeeland has the BEST Chamber Ever."

It's the pursuit of excellence that has made Quality a leader in innovation in their industry. Developing state of the art washing equipment gives them the ability to provide that exceptional customer experience. Laser focus on quality control of their wash equipment and technology enables them to replicate that experience at their ever expanding list of locations, which sets them apart from competitors who don't have that same control over the consistency of their customer experience.

Mandi explained, "Our greatest success so far has been our newest Holland location on the corner of Chicago Dr. and Waverly. This location washed over 400,000 cars in its first year of business, quickly making it our most productive location, and has risen to the one of the top volume car washes in the world. A typical car wash hopes to wash 100,000 cars in the first year."

Quality Car Wash continues to grow, by both building and acquiring carwash locations that operate on the same successful principles as the originals in our area. They currently have operations in Holland, Grand Rapids, Muskegon, Grandville and Jenison, with more coming soon. This growth has quadrupled their workforce, bringing it to over 250 West Michigan team members.

This year Quality was named among the West Michigan Best and Brightest, and in 2016 they were awarded the West Coast Chamber's Business Leadership Award. They have also been recognized by the Holland

Public Safety Department for contributing to the community. "Our business was founded on the support of this community, and in leading for the next generation we will continue to support the community in many endeavors."



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# What is Advocacy in Action, and How Does it Work for You?

By Caroline Monahan



If you're not yet familiar with the term, "Advocacy in Action" is an umbrella for the various West Coast Chamber advocacy programs that promote a business-friendly environment. You'll find Chamber staff, Board members and Ambassadors out in the community every day, actively listening to your concerns and ideas. This is how we stay on top of what is most important to the businesses in West Michigan.

Next, we act. We invite experts to share insight, we bring in our elected officials to hear directly from our members, we convene meetings and events to facilitate discussions, and we publish educational materials to keep our members informed. As the voice of the business community, the West Coast Chamber serves as the advocate at the local, state, and federal levels for our 1,200 member businesses and 64,000 member employees and is committed to promoting action that will improve our business climate and positively impact

our economy. As a Chamber member, you have all of our resources and connections at your fingertips, and we urge you to take advantage of that benefit and stay connected.

There were significant discussions surrounding the ballot proposals and candidates that were presented to voters in the November 2017 elections. The Chamber devoted many resources to making sure members had an opportunity to learn and ask questions from elected officials, and were informed of the potential outcomes for businesses. The passing of the elections has given rise to more discussions on local issues such as Waterfront Holland, Traffic and Infrastructure Planning, Talent and Education, and the "What's Next" conversations surrounding the legalization of marijuana. To learn more about federal policies that impact us locally, we host annual events featuring updates from our federal elected officials, most recently

welcoming US Congressman Bill Huizenga for breakfast with 450 members. Special legislative events such as these, as well as our monthly Public Policy Meetings and Governmental Affairs Breakfasts are the venues, and all members are invited.

Our Public Policy Agenda was created to inform our members, our elected officials, and our community on the position of the West Coast Chamber on issues that impact business. To learn more about our Advocacy in Action efforts, including our Public Policy Priorities and information on our elected officials, visit our website at [www.westcoastchamber.org](http://www.westcoastchamber.org), and click on the Advocating for Our Members tab. There you'll find our 2019 Advocacy in Action Reference Guide. Or stop by the Chamber and pick up a copy for your office. We look forward to working with you on issues that matter most to your business and our community.

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# Wake Up West Coast Preview: Economic Forecasting

By Kara Wassink



Dr. Stacy Jackson

Every day, businesses are making crucial decisions including strategic planning, investing, hiring, operations, and more. To help with these decisions, experts pull data from a spectrum of industries to make recommendations for businesses and government sectors. Economists are also interested in GDP growth and influencing factors for the future.

At the January Wake Up West Coast breakfast, Dr. Stacy Jackson will present a panel of experts that will explain the analysis of data and share the forecast for the local and state economy. Jackson, a business consultant and the Economics & Business department chair at Hope College, will mediate a discussion featuring fellow Hope professors Dr. John Lunn, Dr. Stephen Smith, and Douglas Iverson. The panel will also include Jay Wortley, former Chief Economist and Director of Revenue and Tax Analysis for the Michigan Department of Treasury. Panelists will combine their business, economic, and financial expertise for an interesting breakfast. Registration is open now for this January 8th event.



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# January Calendar of Events

Tuesday, January 8, 2019

## Wake Up West Coast: 2019 Economic Forecast

@Haworth Inn and Conference Center, 225 College Ave, Holland, MI

Forecasts are crucial for helping businesses make important decisions including strategic planning, investing, and hiring. At our January breakfast, we're presenting



a panel of experts who will explain the analysis of data, and share the forecast for our local and state economy. This annual event usually sells out, making it a great networking opportunity for those who register early and claim a seat. Join us!  
Time: 7am Coffee and Networking / 7:30am Breakfast and Presentation  
Cost: \$25 per Chamber member / \$40 per non-member  
Breakfast Sponsor: Chemical Bank

Friday, January 11, 2019

## Advocacy in Action: Public Policy Committee Meeting

@West Coast Chamber

The West Coast Chamber serves as the region's advocate for business at the local, state and federal levels, representing the combined strength of our diverse industry sectors. Interested in governmental and political issues? The Public Policy Committee reviews issues of local and regional concern and makes position recommendations to the Board of Directors. Join us monthly for interesting and sometimes lively discussion about the issues that affect you and your business.

Time: 7:30am Coffee and Networking / 8 - 9:30am Meeting

Cost: There is no cost to attend.



Thursday, January 17, 2019

## Zeeland Affinity Group Meeting

@Howard Miller Community Center, 14 S Church St. Zeeland, MI

The Zeeland Affinity Group is the place to come and meet with other Zeeland business representatives and share experiences.

Recognizing that our Zeeland members would benefit from idea sharing and problem solving with likeminded businesses, we created the Zeeland Affinity Group (ZAG) to give you the opportunity to meet regularly and keep the Zeeland area businesses thriving.

Time: 7am Coffee and Networking / 7:30 - 8:30am Meeting & Presentation

Cost: \$10 per Chamber member / \$20 per non-member

Sponsor: Spectrum Health Zeeland Community Hospital



Monday, January 21, 2019

## Advocacy in Action: Governmental Affairs Breakfast

@Alpenrose Restaurant, 4 E 8th St. Holland, MI

Join us for breakfast with our elected state and federal legislators. Our monthly Governmental Affairs Breakfast gives our members the opportunity to dialog with our local elected state and federal legislators. After a brief update from the Public Policy Committee and each of the legislators, the floor is open for questions from, and discussions with, our members.

Time: 7:30 - 8:30am

Cost: \$25 per Chamber member / \$40 per non-member

Legislative Sponsor: Huntington



Tuesday, January 22, 2019

## Power Happy Hour

@Boatwerks Event Center, 216 Van Raalte Ave, Holland, MI

At this happy hour event, each participant will make over 50 contacts. Arrive at 3:00 pm to grab a drink and browse display booths, make new contacts and win door prizes! Be ready to start promptly at 3:15 pm for Power BINGO, created to make the most of the open networking time.

Time: 3:15 - 5pm

Cost: \$30 per Chamber member / \$45 per non-member

Thursday, January 24, 2019

## 424 Affinity Group Off the Clock

@Great Legs Winery Brewery Distillery, 332 E Lakewood Blvd #200, Holland, MI

Step out of your office to get to know other area business representatives within the 424 Affinity Group!

Time: 4:30 - 6pm

Cost: There is no cost to attend, but registration is appreciated.



Friday, January 25, 2019

## Maximize Your Membership

@West Coast Chamber Learning Lab

Join us for our Maximize Your Membership Orientation lunch to learn about the benefits of membership.

Delivering remarkable experiences is a core value of the West Coast Chamber, and our upbeat and interactive orientation is designed to help new, prospective, and existing members learn how to utilize their memberships for maximum effectiveness. We make it a fun day at the Chamber when we welcome you into our home to get acquainted!

Time: 11:30 am - 1pm

Cost: There is no cost to attend this event, but registration is appreciated. Complimentary lunch will be provided.

Sponsor: Accident Fund



For a full listing of events, visit [www.westcoastchamber.org/events](http://www.westcoastchamber.org/events).



# The Bridge of Holland

By Winsome Maddock



**Store location:**

18 W 8th St.  
Holland, MI 49423

*Kathy has been a dedicated volunteer at The Bridge for eight years.*

Fair-Trade is purchasing goods to then support producers and creators in developing countries. This has been a popular movement for many years now and consumers are loving the idea of purchasing beautiful gifts and goods while also supporting growing businesses. You can participate in the Fair-Trade movement right here in Holland at The Bridge. The Bridge has been a member of the West Coast Chamber and accepting West Coast Cash since 2014.

The merchandise sold at The Bridge ranges from beautiful necklaces made in Ecuador, hand woven baskets perfect for the beach to Wayfarer satchels and Batik Sarongs that are a versatile piece of clothing that can be worn in many ways. Whether you are shopping for loved ones or getting in some retail therapy for yourself, The Bridge is a store where you must plan a stop.

The Bridge isn't only focused on supporting designers around the world, they are also big supporters of the community around them. They host events in Holland to feature new merchandise they get in their store. Last year they had a "Fair Trade Rug Event," where they showcased high quality

Oriental rugs made with acceptable labor standards.

The Bridge has been a well-established storefront in downtown Holland for many years and customers can't stop going back. Reviews about The Bridge are very high, the concept of fair Trade fits in very well with the caring community of Holland.

When you find yourself downtown, looking for a way to purchase a gift and positively impact someone's life here and across the globe, stop into The Bridge of Downtown Holland and spend your West Coast Cash on unique Fair-Trade merchandise.

**What is West Coast Cash?**

It's the community currency program designed to keep shopping local and support the businesses that form the fabric of our community. Certificates are conveniently purchased online at the West Coast Chamber website. Once ordered, purchasers simply print the certificates or email them to a recipient, and then it's time to shop. *Buy yours today at [www.westcoastchamber.org](http://www.westcoastchamber.org).*



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# West Coast Leadership Class of 2018-19

By Caroline Monahan

The 2018-19 West Coast Leadership class has been in session since August. We've been helping you get to know them, and a little about why they enrolled in WCL. This month we bring you seven more class members. Here you'll also see where these classmates work, which is an important thing to note. Their employers make both a financial and time commitment to support the leadership development of these individuals, which is critical to the success of the program. We appreciate the value that these businesses place on a West Coast Leadership education!



**Pete Hoffswell**

Broadband Services Manager  
Holland Board of Public Works

*"West Coast Leadership will give participants additional skills to further our goals both at work and in our community. The knowledge I gain will help me succeed in goals to enhance HBPW fiber infrastructure in our area and build programs to bring creative educational opportunities through Lakeshore Makers."*



**Rebecca Lamper**

Holland Member Center Manager  
West Shore District Manager  
Community Choice Credit Union

*"I am excited to be in this class because I feel empowered by knowing all I can about the community in which I live and work. I turn this around to help understand the needs of the community to best serve them. In order to continually grow as a leader, I also feel you need to learn how others communicate, learn and appreciate feedback. I am always looking for opportunities to be a better leader!"*



**Crystal A. Roberts**

Sr. Auditor/ Software Supervisor/  
Unlimited Club Supervisor  
Quality Car Wash

*"Like most, after we leave college and start families, our circle of influence and friendships starts to dwindle as we settle down into routines and professions. I am excited at this opportunity to step out of the box and meet lots of other new and interesting people that make decisions and impact our community. I cannot wait to dig in and start this next great adventure!"*



**Grace Silva**

Chief Financial Officer  
Elzinga & Volkers, Inc.

*"I am excited to meet other leaders in the community and learn from our different experiences. I'm also interested in learning more about the area where I grew up and new ways to become involved."*



**Todd Stockdale**

Vice President of Operations  
IFR

*"I am looking forward to getting connected and finding more ways to contribute to this great community and those who call it home."*



**Ann M. Sullivan**

Finance Manager  
Shoreline Orthopaedics

*"I am thrilled to be accepted into the 2018-2019 West Coast Leadership class!! I look forward to meeting my classmates, developing my leadership skills, and learning more about this wonderful community where I work, live and play."*



**Ty Tanis**

Development Director  
Boys & Girls Club of Greater  
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*"I'm excited to continue developing personally and professionally while gaining a deeper understanding into what makes the lakeshore a thriving community!"*

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# Happenings at the Chamber



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GMB's Dan Tyrer shares the news that GMB won the 2018 Commercial Design Award for the Chamber renovation.



Leading Edge guests enjoy learning about effective communication.



Members learn about the impact of the new policies on marijuana on the workplace.

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