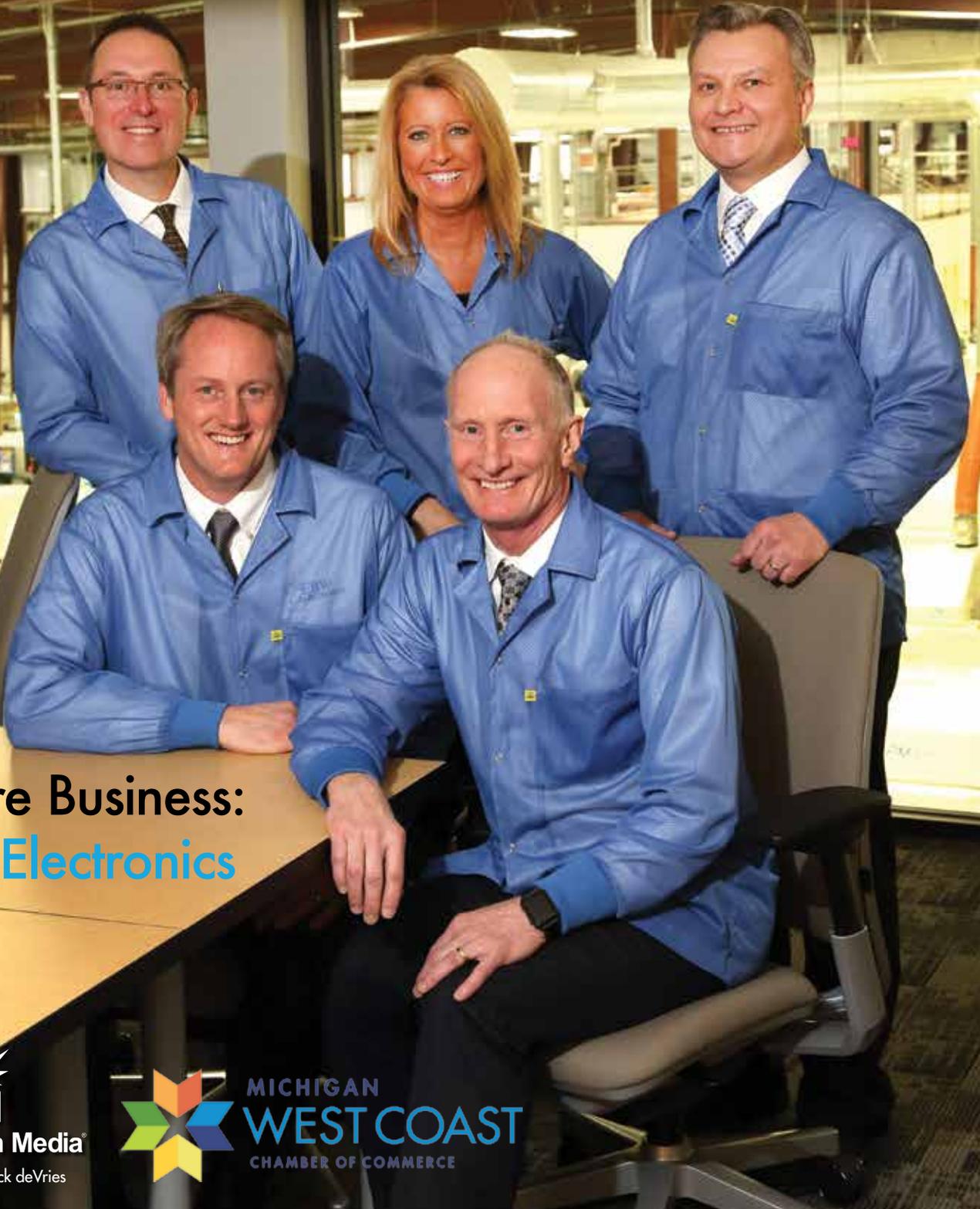


# CONNECT

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March 2016



**Feature Business:**  
**EBW Electronics**

## Meet MIC

Your membership with the West Coast Chamber gives you exclusive access to specialized tools to promote your organization via our new online **Member Information Center (MIC)**.

The MIC will simplify and enrich your online experience, providing new opportunities to grow and interact within the West Coast Chamber community. These features will allow you to:

- Update your personal or organization information
- Have quick, easy access to event registration
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- Submit your own news release for posting on the Chamber website
- Upload pictures, videos and maps for your company page on the Chamber website
- Choose what information is shown on our online Chamber member directory
- Find other members
- Access member resources
- Refer a colleague to us for membership follow-up



It is important that you check your company information for accuracy! And always remember: log in often to register for events, keep your information up-to-date and keep yourself in-the-know on what's happening.

**THE DEADLINE TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE COMPANY INFORMATION THAT IS PRINTED IN OUR ANNUAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY IS MARCH 31!**

If you have any questions or comments, do not hesitate to contact us.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Feature Business .....	4
504 Program .....	6
Tips and Tricks.....	7
Public Policy Update.....	8
Member Testimonial.....	9
Get To Know Your Legislators .....	9
Calendar of Events.....	10
New Members .....	12
Happenings at the Chamber .....	14



## ADVERTISING INDEX

Accident Fund.....	14
Buis Mattress & Bedroom Furnishings.....	12
Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling.....	16
CertaPro Painters.....	6
City Flats Hotel .....	8
deVries Photography.....	10
Fris Office Outfitters .....	9
Gordon Water Systems .....	13
Hospice of Holland.....	14
Lakewood Construction.....	5
Mercantile Bank of Michigan .....	14
Muller Design .....	7
Pembleton HR Consulting.....	9
Shoreline Technology Solutions.....	11
Spectrum Net Designs .....	13
Suburban Inns.....	13
Wendy Ryder Sotheby's Intl. Realty.....	14
Yacht Basin Marina.....	9
Zeeland Lumber .....	7



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**PUBLISHER:** Patrick Avery  
**CONTENT COORDINATOR:** Chelsea Hall  
**DESIGNER:** Donna Johnson  
**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER:** DeVries Photography

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Have feedback, ideas, or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 8th of each month. Go to [www.bestversionmedia.com](http://www.bestversionmedia.com) and click "Submit Content." You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to:

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**Caroline Monahan**, Marketing Coordinator, West Coast Chamber: [caroline@westcoastchamber.org](mailto:caroline@westcoastchamber.org)

**Liz Hoffswell**, Vice President, Marketing, West Coast Chamber: [liz@westcoastchamber.org](mailto:liz@westcoastchamber.org)

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Content submissions and new business sponsors must be received by the 8th of each month for the next month's publication.

*Magazines usually hit mailboxes within the first week of the month. Days may vary depending on the post office.*

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# Letter from Jane Clark

President, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce



"Living EOS" is an often repeated phrase, question, mantra at the Chamber. Are we living it? How can we use our EOS tools to keep us focused on our mission? How does our staff live EOS in our interactions with our members and within our team? With a track record of guiding over 16,000 companies worldwide, including local companies such as this month's featured company, EBW Electronics, Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) has also become the touchstone by which we at the Chamber make decisions and take actions. It is a system that harnesses and unifies our vision, gives us traction to remain focused and accountable, and keeps our team cohesive and engaged.

The Chamber started our EOS journey in the summer of 2015, and now live it on a daily basis, building staff meetings and training sessions around the concepts. It has become a universal language that permeates our organization and empowers each of us to use the tools to make decisions, and to use our own personal strengths to keep the Chamber thriving and moving in the desired direction. EOS is, quite simply, a holistic approach to keeping businesses strong and looking forward, and we look forward to where it is taking us. Where can EOS take your business? Learn more at [www.eosworldwide.com](http://www.eosworldwide.com).

Best Regards,  
Jane Clark



## Vision Statement:

Strengthen our community as the best location to live, learn, work and play.

## Mission Statement:

Enhance our members' success, advance our economy, and improve our quality of life.

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## PREMIER PARTNERS





# Feature Business: EBW ELECTRONICS

By Chelsea Hall

EBW Electronics (EBWE) is a highly automated manufacturing firm specializing in printed circuit board assemblies (PCBA) and in particular assemblies containing light-emitting diode (LEDs). EBWE has grown significantly since their inception, while remaining nimble enough to service the demands of a broad spectrum of client needs. Chairman Pat LeBlanc and President Cory Steeby sat down with *Connect* to discuss how the business began, what the future holds, and everything in-between.

## Beginning

“EBWE was founded in 1992 in Holland, Michigan as a captive electronics supplier for its parent company, EBW,” explained Chairman Pat LeBlanc. When EBW was sold in 2000, it became necessary that EBWE diversify their products and customer base.

Shifting focus and resources, EBWE began developing products and engineering expertise centered on illumination. “When LEDs and their associated components became more available and affordable, we were well-positioned to compete from a leadership position in the field of manufacturing PCBAs containing LEDs,” Pat explained. “EBWE was subsequently primed for the rapid conversion to LEDs in the automotive market.”

## Growth

Operating three shifts a day, five to six days per week, EBWE has never shied away from progress. In fact, in 2013, they were named the fastest growing, privately-held manufacturing company in the five state Midwest region of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin, according to *Inc.* magazine. Between 2009 and 2013, the company’s revenue grew at the astonishing rate of 675% and employment jumped from 35 to 151. In the subsequent years, revenue has continued to grow and the number of employees has risen to 262 at the time of printing.

EBWE would eventually outgrow their facility, not once but twice, expanding most recently in 2014 by adding another 36,000 square feet, to total 71,000 in all. Also in 2014, adjoining property was purchased, which will eventually accommodate a 250,000 square foot facility.

## Edge

In a global industry that is highly competitive and constantly evolving, EBWE has remained agile, resourceful and innovative, qualities that ultimately amount to staying viable. “Designing and building PCBAs is an industry dominated by the low cost labor regions of Asia and Mexico,” Pat explained. “By continuously upgrading to the most up-to-date, automated assembly equipment, EBWE successfully competes on price with competitors from these foreign countries.” Additionally, EBWE’s location gives them the edge when it comes to turnaround time. “Same day delivery and a shortened supply chain are huge customer benefits because of the rapid pace of change in LED technology,” said Pat. Clients also cite the strength of the EBWE engineering design and manufacturing talent as one of the main reasons they continue to do business with the firm, recognition that Pat and his team don’t take for granted.



Pat repeated his father Leo’s accomplishment 24 years later by being named the 2015 Michigan Small Business Person of the Year.



Cory’s ability to plan ahead and anticipate future demand for the contract electrical manufacturing services is the foundation for EBWE’s rapid growth.



From left to right: Director of Engineering Dennis Hawver, Controller Luanne Verner, President Cory Steeby, Chairman Pat LeBlanc and Vice President Tom Clark.

➤ *"Many times over the years EBWE has created success by diving into a program or project that by any measure appeared too large or too unique for us to handle. Sometimes when you know too much you avoid a project that could bring success. Other times when you don't know enough you could land a project that could become a problem. Knowing how to find that balance can be a great place to successfully grow a business."*

— President, Cory Steeby

## Challenge

EBWE's path to success has not been without trials. A particularly trying time arose when they lost a client that accounted for 60% of sales. Shortly after, the economic crisis of 2008 occurred. Forced to trim back staff and recruit new clients, EBWE subsequently needed new equipment to manufacture products. "Knowing that bank financing was not possible in the economy of the time, Pat and his family stood behind EBWE and invested personally in new equipment to essentially restart the organization," Cory shared. This gesture, a representation of unwavering confidence and support, has proven to be a companywide guidepost, central to EBWE's achievements. "As we succeed today with this strength of staff and systems, we fondly recall the history behind our success," said Cory.

## Recognition

### EBWE:

2007: Michigan Top 50 Companies to Watch  
2013-15: *Inc.* magazine list of fastest growth privately-held companies in U.S.

### Pat LeBlanc:

2014 West Coast Chamber Small Business Person of the Year  
2015 State of Michigan Small Business Person of the Year  
2015 Michigan State University West Michigan Alumni Business Person of the Year

## People

Pat and Cory agree that the EBWE employees are an integral part of the company's success, quantitated by extremely low turnover and high rates of attendance. "Throughout all of its success, EBWE is proud not only of its growth, facility and state of the art automation, but its ability to maintain a family-like atmosphere," Pat said.

That atmosphere is evidenced by company events such as the formal Christmas gala, summer picnics complete with amusement rides, games and a catered lunch and regular employee recognition in the form of awards. "At Thanksgiving, the EBWE executive team personally hands out turkeys to every employee," Pat shared.

➤ *"Huge inspiration comes from seeing our team gather around our cause and work together to create successful customers."*  
— President, Cory Steeby

## Giving Back

Proof that generosity is a companywide value is EBWE Gives, an employee-run charity group that holds several fundraisers a year. "All proceeds raised by the committee are 100% matched

by EBWE," said Pat, who added that the Center for Women in Transition, Benjamin's Hope and Pathways have all received substantial donations from EBWE Gives.

➤ *"With our growth in the past several years it has been wonderful to be able to provide jobs in Holland and also to give back to our community through organizations we support like the Boys and Girls Club, Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity, and CHAOS the Holland Public / Black River Robotics team."*  
— President, Cory Steeby

## Future

In 2015, EBWE aimed to complete and improve their building expansion, as well as fill positions in key growth areas and implement a business-wide software program. "We were pleased to have met each of those goals," Pat said. "The major goals for EBWE in 2016 are to achieve TS 16949 certification, refine our sales strategy and reduce the internal defect rate by 50% over a 12-month period."

➤ *"The West Coast Chamber has been very helpful to EBWE. We have sent many employees to Chamber sponsored events and they have greatly appreciated the opportunity. Last year, we had a ribbon-cutting ceremony for our latest expansion. In attendance were many local dignitaries, Governor Snyder and media. The Chamber coordinated the entire event for us in a very professional manner. I can't say thank you to them enough for how fantastic of a job they did."*  
— Pat LeBlanc, Chairman

From humble beginnings and substantial growth, to persevering and thriving in the midst of challenges and economic downturns, EBWE continues to be a leader in the electrical manufacturing field, proving that old fashioned hard work and integrity ultimately lead to success.

EBW Electronics is located at 13110 Ransom Street in Holland, Michigan. Reach them by phone at 616-786-0575 or online at [www.ebwe.com](http://www.ebwe.com).



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# Grow and Succeed: Restructure your finances with the Lakeshore 504 refinance program to get the funds you need to grow your business!

Starting this summer, small businesses will be able to leverage their fixed assets to get the cash they need with a below-market fixed-rate 504 loan from Lakeshore 504.

The 504 loan allows borrowers to refinance up to 90% of the current appraised value of their property, and put the remaining equity towards the down payment or other eligible expenses.

### Eligible Expenses:

- (Unpaid) business credit card debt
- Expenses that will be incurred by business within 18 months of application
- Maintenance
- Improvements that do not increase a building's footprint
- Equipment
- Paying down a line of credit
- Utility bills
- Insurance
- Wages and salaries
- Inventory
- Rent

As an example:

Shirley owns a bowling alley and she would like to expand her business to have food service as well. Shirley's property appraises for \$3,000,000 and she has an outstanding mortgage of \$2,250,000, leaving \$750,000 in equity. Her new expansion plans have the following costs:

Kitchen & Dining Equipment:	\$350,000
Salaries for New Employees:	\$100,000
<b>Total Project Costs:</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>

By refinancing her property, her loan would be structured like this:

Shirley's Bank (50%):	\$1,500,000
Lakeshore 504 (40%):	\$1,200,000
Shirley (10%):	\$300,000

Refinancing through the 504 program gives Shirley the \$450,000 she needs to grow her business. Additionally, she has a 20 year fixed below-market rate for the 504 portion of the loan!

### You Don't Have to Expand!

If your business has a loan coming due, you can also refinance with 504 loan. This gives your business the stability of refinancing into a 10 or 20 year fixed, below-market interest rate loan.

### 504 Rates for January 2015

4.83% – 20 Year

4.27% – 10 Year

To be eligible for the 504 refinancing program, a business must have been in operation for at least two years and the debt to be refinanced must be for owner-occupied real estate.

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## Tips And Tricks: Productivity Apps for Getting Things Done



We all know that feeling when you leave the house without your smartphone. The pit in your stomach, as you wonder how you'll stay connected throughout the day. Checking email, finding our way to new places, and on the spot entertainment are all second nature to us now.

But are you getting the most out of your phone? Do you know that it can be indispensable as personal assistants and productivity aids? The same thing goes for iPads and other tablets. From note-taking and mobile office suites to calendars, timers and to-do lists, there are apps that make everyday life easier and more enjoyable. We've been testing these out at the Chamber.

Some favorites we learned about at our Tech Lunch with Bill Badran of BandA Tech Solutions:

**Notability** – The note taking app that allows you to handwrite and dictate notes, and create sharable files.

**Adobe Reader** – A free app that allows you to freehand write notes on top of a document and share for editing.

**Expensify** – Tracks your expenses such as mileage and receipts (via smart scan) and allows you to print reports.

**Wunderlist** – A detailed to do list app.

**Producteev** – Organizes collaborative projects.



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## Public Policy Update: The Chamber on the Roads



Steve Bulthuis,  
Executive Director  
of the MACC

When the Chamber supported a proposal with Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, it resulted in extra funding for more road repair projects. Steve Bulthuis, Executive Director of the MACC, had this to say about having the Chamber as a partner:

*“The Chamber’s efforts in terms of analyzing the state transportation funding ballot proposal (Prop. 1), the board taking a formal position on the proposal and then informing their membership of that position and advocating in favor of passage of the ballot proposal was tremendous. The Chamber has an extensive membership and is highly regarded in the community. When they take a position on an issue, it is noticed by the community. Their efforts were joined with initiatives by other regional*

*organizations such as the MACC which showed that both private and public interests were in support of Prop. 1.*

*While Prop. 1 failed at the polls, our state elected officials saw the support from significant organizations, such as the Chamber, for improving our transportation infrastructure and worked to pass funding bills to increase transportation revenues.*

*The Michigan Department of Transportation is now looking at additional road and bridge projects on BL-196 (Chicago Drive) and I-196 in the Holland-Zeeland area. These projects were not in their original plans but are now being considered in light of anticipated additional revenue. This is a very positive outcome for our area.”*



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Member Testimonial:  
**Helen Zeerip,**  
 Teddy's Transport



“Teddy’s Transport has been a member of the Chamber since 1992. I have gotten so much out of their programs, from networking to their Michigan West Coast Leadership program, which I highly recommend everyone take! You just need to join and get involved, it will help you possibly attain more business, get some marketing and learn something in the process. I would recommend the Chamber to anyone who wants to succeed!”

— Helen Zeerip, *Teddy's Transport*

Spotlight on **Kevin Klynstra,**  
 Mayor of Zeeland for 4 years



**Q:** What lessons has your work life taught you?

**A:** I have owned two part-time businesses in my lifetime and they taught me how to work with different people. They also taught me to keep the customers happy and be friendly and courteous while doing that.

**Q:** Why is the voice of the business community important to you?

**A:** Business is the lifeblood of Zeeland. We are fortunate to have many world class organizations that operate in our city. This gives us the tax base to be able to give our citizens a safe and fun place to live and work. This also gives many small businesses a chance to thrive and operate in our community

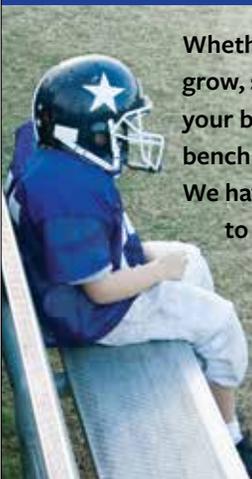
**Q:** What unique challenges and opportunities do businesses in West Michigan present for you?

**A:** Businesses today are always being recruited by different states and cities, offering cheaper taxes, better infrastructure and a bigger cheaper workforce, so we have to keep our taxes as low as possible. We also must keep our infrastructure up to date to keep up with any expansions or utility needs they might need. Making sure we have a community that is appealing to businesses’ employees and their families will help retain existing businesses and attract new ones.

**Q:** What unique challenges and opportunities do businesses in West Michigan present for you?

**A:** The best part of being a part of the Chamber is the help they give in the retention and attraction of business and employees. Additionally, programs and events they offer to help us do a better job, private or public.

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# March Calendar of Events

## Tuesday, March 8 Early Bird Breakfast

@Haworth Inn & Conference Center, 225 College Avenue Michigan's Lt.

Governor, Brian Calley, joins us for this popular event. It's an early morning well spent when you attend a Chamber Early Bird Breakfast.

Network with your colleagues, meet new ones, and learn

about an interesting topic that can help your business. Feel free to come even earlier. Pre-coffee networking begins at 7am.

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: \$15 per Chamber member (\$20 if registered after March 6), \$25 per non-member



Michigan's Lt. Governor, Brian Calley

## Thursday, March 10 Legislative Luncheon with Fred Upton

@Baker Lofts, 171 E 24th Street, Holland Congressman Upton will be addressing the members of the Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce on topics of interest to the local business community.

Time: 11:30am-1pm

Cost: \$30 per

Chamber member / \$50 per non-Chamber member / \$240 table for eight / \$750 Corporate Sponsor / \$1500 Executive Sponsor



Congressman Fred Upton

## Friday, March 11 Public Policy Committee Meeting

@West Coast Chamber Office, 272 E 8th Street, Holland

Interested in governmental and political issues? Join us monthly for interesting and sometimes lively discussions about the issues that affect you and your business.

Time: 8-9:30am

Cost: Free

## Tuesday, March 15 Project Clarity Update

@Haworth Inn & Conference Center, 225 College Avenue, Holland

Join us for an update on the Project Clarity initiative, a community-wide collaboration to clean, restore and maintain the waters of Lake Macatawa and the Macatawa Watershed. Breakfast will be served. Sign up online through the Outdoor Discovery Center website, on Eventbrite, or call 616-393-9453.

Time: 7:30-9:00am

Cost: \$15 per person (pre-registration), or \$18 at the door

## Thursday, March 17 Tech Lunch - Managing Your Pot of Gold

@Herrick District Library 300 S River Avenue, Holland

Stay connected with how technology can help you manage your company's finances. Feel free to bring your own lunch or order from Captain Terry's cafe!

Time: 11:30am-1pm

Cost: Free



## Monday, March 21 Governmental Affairs Breakfast

@Alpenrose Restaurant, 4 E 8th Street, Holland

Join us for breakfast with our elected state and federal legislators. Ample time is provided for questions and answers.

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: \$15 per Chamber member (\$20 if registered after March 18), \$25 per non-member

## Tuesday, March 22 Ambassador Committee Meeting

@The Macatawa Legends Golf & Country Club, 4600 Macatawa Legends Blvd, Holland

Become active in the West Coast Chamber

by joining a committee! The Ambassador Committee develops membership involvement through an array of events and programs.

Time: 8-9am

Cost: Free

## Tuesday, March 22 Be Nice

@Elhart Automotive Campus (Collision Center Training Facility), 822 Chicago Drive, Holland

Jeff Elhart of Elhart Automotive Campus and Christy Buck, Executive Director of the Mental Health Foundation of West Michigan will share the "be nice" tool and how you can use it in your workplace to help others.

Time: 11:30am-1pm

Cost: Free, and lunch is provided

## Wednesday, March 23 Network @ Lunch

@Macatawa Legends Golf & Country Club, 4600 Macatawa Legends Blvd, Holland

Make new contacts and share about yourself and your business. It's a relaxed business lunch, made easy.

Time: 12-1pm

Cost: \$10 per Chamber member, \$20 per non-member (Payment due at the event)

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Thursday, March 24

**Power Breakfast**

@Baker Lofts, 171 E 24th Street, Holland

Take the work out of networking! At this popular and fun event, each participant will make at least 21 contacts during the structured networking time. Freestyle power networking begins at the pre-coffee and plenty of door prizes are given away at the close of the event.

Time: 7:45-9:30am

Cost: \$15 per Chamber member (\$20 if registered after March 22), \$25 per non-member, \$35 for display table (Chamber members only)

Wednesday, March 30

**Seminar on Problem Solving, Decision-Making & Delegation**

@Davenport University, Holland Campus, 643 S Waverly Rd, Holland

The key to finding creative solutions rests in our ability to identify options, research them and the put plans together in a way that works. Join us as the pros from Davenport University's Institute for Professional Excellence (IPEX) teach you how to solve problems, make decisions and delegate.

Time: 8:30-11 am

Cost: \$45 per Chamber member (\$50 if registered after Nov 16), \$60 per non-member

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



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New Member Orientation



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