

WEST MICHIGAN'S BEST AND BRIGHTEST[®] COMPANIES TO WORK FOR

2020 WEST MICHIGAN'S BEST & BRIGHTEST BEST PRACTICES

4Front Credit Union has an employee write and perform a 4Front parody to the tune of "Despacito," that described roles and services with humor. It was such a hit, it was incorporated into their onboarding process as a fun, identifiable way to engage new talent.

a.j. Veneklasen, Inc. uses behavioral assessments during the interview process to ensure they attract and retain top talent. They have found that it is not only important to have the right "job fit," but also the right "cultural fit."

ABD Engineering & Design, Inc. has a customized interview process that gives applicants the opportunity to know the entire staff, as well as share their values and passions.

The **Adventure Credit Union** level of member service stands out from other institutions. They offer intensive training on member service, lead by example, and understand they wouldn't be here today without their members.

AEBetancourt's Force for Good program is unique in that it is more than just one day per year that is paid for volunteer purposes. They ask that employees volunteer for causes related to employment, which can be anything from schools to assisting those in the community with finding new employment.

When **Air Lift Company** lost a team member to breast cancer, their employees supported her family by pitching in to help cover funeral costs and outstanding medical bills, organized a team for the Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk, and raised money to help support the American Cancer Society in honor of their lost coworker.

Allied Business Services began bi-weekly focus groups with its employees to focus on topics such as employee retention, hiring strategies, and community involvement.

Allied Electronic Inc. asks that their employees volunteer for causes related to employment. Their team teaches many classes with the Women's Resource Center and spends time bi-weekly in the Kent County Correctional Facility, teaching incarcerated women how to find and sustain gainful employment when they are released.

Amerifirst Home Mortgage has an internal program called AmeriWish, where team members can wish for anything they want, such as medical expenses, funerals, vacations, cars, etc., to be paid for.

Andy J. Egan Co. posts on their intranet "20 things you didn't know about your co-worker," to help people get to know each other and share things that may not typically come up in work conversation.

Arbor Financial Credit Union has an innovation box where staff can submit ideas to improve the credit union. Often these ideas save the organization money or time and have made life easier for the staff and members.

Armstrong International has 100% trust in all of the employees, which led them to eliminate the use of time cards, locked cabinets, and vending machines.

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Axios HR continuously reinvents themselves through organizational strategy shifts, as well as individual executive education.

Baker Holtz, CPAs and Advisors did away with a time-based service model and implemented a value-based pricing culture, allowing professionals to be all-stars, without being constrained by a billable hour budget that they must achieve.

One of the **Barnes & Thornburg LLP** attorneys has started an office newsletter that highlights employees' lives outside of work (i.e., participation in a race, each family's Christmas traditions, etc.). This has been a great way to further cultivate inter-office professional relationships and boost morale, which in turn strengthens the office as a whole.

Baudville Brands' internal recognition and appreciation program using points cards, peer to peer recognition, celebration of every employee's service anniversary every year, and peer and management nomination programs, is a first class way to show employees that they are the company's greatest asset.

BDO USA, LLP offers a top-notch "Total Rewards" program, which includes all of the things traditionally thought of as benefits, such as compensation and health insurance, but also encompasses work-life programs, personal and professional growth opportunities, and wellness programs.

At **Beene Garter LLP**, tax and audit department partners meet together three times per year to discuss the staff's performance, progress, and future development needs.

Bell's Brewery launched an annual all-employee engagement survey to get employee feedback and to help identify and implement new engagement projects that address employee concerns and requests.

Belwith Products, LLC has made an intentional effort to give back to their community through financial gifts, as well as encouraging employees to volunteer.

Each year, **BHS Insurance** hosts a weekend-long fall outing for their employees, who have the option to bring one of their friends or family members along. This fall the outing will be in Traverse City at the Grand Traverse Resort.

Leaders work hard to build relationships and get to know the **BizStream** team on a personal level, both at work and outside of work, with backpacking trips, golf outings, Star Wars viewings, social hours, weekly CrossFit classes, etc.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan has a Blue Cross Health and wellness program offers a variety of incentives to employees, to help them live a healthy life style, including cooking classes, weight management challenges, walking programs, and discounts for events and restaurants.

Blue Medora LLC has quarterly event called Blue Medorathon. At this event, employees are given the opportunity to work on passion projects that they wouldn't typically have the time to work on during a normal work day. At the end of the evening, each person is given the opportunity to share with the team what they have developed. It is a wonderful team-building opportunity that allows employees to create and think beyond the day to day.

Brink, Key, & Chludzinski creates conversation, laughter, and fun with a Fantasy Football competition where they have a trophy for the winner and a plaque for the loser.

Broadmoor Motor Sales encourages employees to build relationships beyond surface level. They share the tough things in life with each other and have found that this has helped create an environment where people put most of their energy into serving others.

Buist Electric's has a "BE the Light" program provides each employee with \$750 per year to use for paid time off or to support travel or other expenses for volunteerism.

Butterball Farms, Inc. has a strong belief in giving everyone an opportunity for employment, including returning citizens. Not only do they follow this practice, but they are developing a program to encourage other employers to do so.

CasterDepot engages the community through the sponsorship of sports, church events, school events, or non-profits. Additionally, they discount or donate products for local and community organizations.

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Every aspect of **Charter Capital Partners** is open and collaborative, from their office space to their financial results. Such a high degree of transparency further strengthens the close team.

Choice Schools Associates has created a community where the people they employ, the families they serve, and the students they teach can thrive.

Clark Retirement Community is unique because they embrace younger generations by offering flexible schedules and more communication through the use of social media and electronic communications, and have increased focus on education and development of employees.

Comfort Research presents their FAB awards to any Comfort Research Ambassador that "Finds a Better Way." FAB submissions can be anything from finding a better way to fill bean bag chairs to painting a wall pink because it cheers up the team. FAB winners receive \$2,500 for a quarterly win, and the overall winner receives \$25,000!

CompHealth has taken employee feedback and implemented more flexible work schedule options, provided a gradual transition to full-time work after maternity/paternity/adoption leave, increased their 401(k) match, and added subsidized humanitarian trip opportunities.

To stay competitive with salary and benefits, **Consumers Credit Union** conducts a strategic review of compensation and benefits three times annually.

CTS Telecom strives to answer 95% of incoming calls with a live, in-house person. If all agents are on the phone, there is an answering service, but the goal is for the answering service to be needed only after hours.

Davenport University's values are brought to life through an acronym, STAIR, which is promoted and reported on by every employee. STAIR stands for: Serving with quality, Trustworthiness, Accountability, Innovation, and Respect and inclusion. Every year, employees are evaluated on how they embody these values. During their annual all-staff meeting, they hand out nine awards to employees who exemplify these behaviors in their work.

DeWys Manufacturing Inc. has a University that implemented an updated approach to fill positions, which has given them the opportunity to find the right person and train him/her to be the right fit for a position, helping to overcome the challenge of finding candidates in skilled trades and motivating people who lack training. DeWys has changed their culture by recognizing that they are looking for people willing to be trained, highlighting the importance of training internally and externally to team members. The return on investment for DeWys has been increased retention, as team members do not feel like they are undervalued.

DFCU Financial currently offer a Wellness reimbursement program. They provide 50% reimbursement up to \$200 annually for wellness programs and equipment. Employees can use the money for gym memberships, exercise classes, and supervised weight management classes, such as Weight Watchers. Exercise equipment has included items like Fitbits and Apple watches.

One hundred percent of **DK Security's** management team is active in the community through board, committee, or volunteer service, and the company itself sponsors a number of community events and fundraisers.

Dominion Systems Inc. offers goal-focused bonuses and a comprehensive benefits plan to all employees. With generous PTO policies, flexible schedules, volunteer time off, and more, we strive to create a compelling compensation and benefits program for current employees, as well as future talent.

The **Easter Seals** Leadership Team supports and values education, competency-based training, and ongoing staff development, and allocates 2-3% of the overall budget to training and development initiatives.

Eckert Wordell has two committees that team members can volunteer to participate on: Social Events and Community Initiatives. Each year they ask members to determine if they would like to continue with their committee or offer their seat to another team member. They always have the volunteers they need to plan events for the office, whether it is for a potluck or giving back to their community.

Eenhoorn holds a National Outreach Week, in which the teams in all of the various markets where they do business spend a day volunteering at a different non-profit, charitable organization.

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Elzinga & Volkers Construction Progressionals provided training to certify their employees on how to identify and respond to somebody who is struggling, depressed, or suicidal. On Valentine's Day, the company treats employees with manicures or pedicures, wine, and chocolates.

Emmanuel Hospice has an Innovation Day to engage with their staff in a non-traditional setting, to receive feedback and develop new ideas for the upcoming 3-year strategic plan. Each year, small groups of staff from different departments gather together for 2-hour strategy sessions throughout the day, which include interactive group activities and discussion sessions. Staff members provide feedback on work culture, share successes/failures, and generate new ideas for patient care.

Epitec formed the Epitec Leadership Style and Skill Development group, where executive leadership, managers, and aspiring leaders meet once a month to collect information, learn, and share

EQI, Ltd. created a team called the "Culture Club," with the primary task of coming up with new, creative ideas that will further enhance their amazing culture and to monitor the overall pulse of the EQI workforce.

Express Employment Professionals have implemented "Lean Office" into their organization and are committed to improving processes and adding back minutes to everyone's day. They spend time working on initiatives and have implemented a Lean Council as a part of their team.

Family Promise of Grand Rapids is highly engaged in the community, based on the work they do. They partner with other agencies to share staff and resources as needed. If they have an abundance of something, they share it with another organization who might have a need.

Fettig has an F3 event – Fettig Fab Functions – designed to have fun and experience something new as a team. Part of the uniqueness of this program is that events are planned by a pair of Fettig team members, who are able to display their own personality to the company by planning a fun event for all to enjoy. F3s have included high ropes courses, racing go-karts, cooking classes, escape rooms, and many, many more.

Feyen Zylstra enhanced their employee referral program and increased the referral bonus to either \$1.00 or \$2.00 per hour for each qualified referral for up to 12 months, and gamified it with a World Cup theme which had team & round winnings.

For their annual full staff meeting, **Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering, Inc.** sends a team of senior leadership to prepare and cook breakfast for the employees at each office.

Flexco hosts a variety of winter contests for their employees, including the "First Snowfall" contest to commemorate the first day where more than one inch of snow was registered at the Kent County Airport, with the winner taking home a \$25 Meijer gift card.

Flexfab invests in employees' educational success by paying 100% of tuition expenses for all of their associates seeking educational opportunities. They have an open door policy for executive team members, which has helped support their Humble H.E.A.R.T.S. ideologies and is a visual representation of linear teamwork in all areas of their organization.

Flow-Rite Controls opened their doors to the Toys for Tots organization and provide space in the warehouse for their main distribution center.

Foresight Management implemented Culture Pods that meet twice a month to check in, discuss the needs of each member, and help encourage/hold each other accountable.

Garrison Dental utilizes employee referrals as their most effective recruiting method, as they take pride in their employees' willingness to recommend their friends and family to Garrison as a preferred employer.

Ghafari Associates, LLC offers Cigna's Life Assistance Program, a service to help employees identify and resolve personal concerns -- substance abuse, health, emotional, legal, marital, or family issues -- that may affect one's personal or professional life.

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GMB Architecture + Engineering implemented a "Team of Teams" to provide linkages between teams, which gives the ability to think and act as a unit and, as they grow, make new employees successful at a very rapid pace.

GNS Holland, Inc. has a two-week structured training program called "FIRST FOURTEEN." New employees receive 2-3 hours a day of off-the-floor training and development in their newly-created employee training room. Employees learn everything from company core values, safety, and quality expectations, to their internal computer systems. On the last day, they have a graduation lunch with the trainer and their area and plant managers.

Grand Rapids Label Company has a "Friends and Family Program" that allows family members and friends of current employees to work for them on a temporary basis or pick up hours and additional pay when it may be needed (i.e., college students home on break, retirees looking for short term employment, etc.).

The **Grand Rapids Metrology** new employee trainer is facilitated in a peer-to-peer format, where responsibility for the facilitation of training is placed on the technician, truly giving him or her the "keys to the castle." Training is provided by a peer deemed a subject matter expert in a specific discipline. After the training has been completed, the trainer fills out an evaluation form to capture the entire training experience.

Grand Rapids Aseptic Manufacturing implemented a paid parental leave policy in 2019 to support new parents and time with family during what can be a challenging time.

Greenleaf Hospitality Group is one of several local businesses in Southwest Michigan that sponsors the South West Michigan Employer Resource Network (SWMERN). SWMERN is a program to help employees access social service and training programs that support employment. SWMERN partners with the local government, nonprofits, and private employers to offer the best resources available.

Greenleaf Trust has a Communication and Culture Workgroup, dedicated to cultivating a caring workplace culture that inspires employee connectivity, fosters teamwork, and embodies the core values established by their founder, because they believe team member engagement is a top priority.

GT Independent CEO does live webinars to provide updates on company progress.

The **Gun Lake Casino** onboarding process includes a two-day celebration and invites new team members to learn about their company, their Tribe, their community, and their leaders. The executive team and members of the tribal council meet with each new team members. When the new team members are assigned their job coach on the second day, they are paired with an instant friend and mentor. Following the celebration, the new team member and job coach have a detailed plan for training, with feedback for both the new team member and the job coach.

Hastings Mutuals Insurance Company is partnering with the Barry Community Foundation and all Barry County School Districts to provide an education savings plan for every kindergarten student in the county. They also provide financial literacy lessons and books to encourage savings.

Heritage Community of Kalamazoo has a GROW initiative which was developed to provide a platform and support for all employees to develop a learning path for their career at Heritage. The acronym stands for Guidance, Resources, Opportunity, and Wisdom, and has significantly changed the performance evaluation process at Heritage. This program allows staff to dream about what they would like to be and work towards those goals.

Highpoint Community Bank has an annual award called Excellence in Service, given to the employee (nominated by their peers) who demonstrates commitment to the bank, dedication to service, willingness to assist fellow employees, and makes important contributions toward the goals and objectives of the bank. Employees submit their nominations directly to the President and CEO. The winner is recognized at an All Employee Meeting and receives a crystal trophy and two roundtrip tickets to anywhere in the continental US.

Hoekstra Electrical Services has some on-the-spot recognition practices, acknowledgement of "wins" at foremen meetings, and sharing of on-the-job successes at employee meetings. They also pay out occasional "above and beyond" job bonuses and quarterly profit sharing.

Holland Hospital's Volunteer Council has awarded scholarships to qualified area students seeking higher education in the health care field, including three scholarships in the amount of \$3,000 each to motivated candidates.

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Honigman LLP developed the Professional Attorney Path and Paralegal Professional Path programs, which not only arm employees with lifelong skill sets, but also demonstrate trust and eagerness to drive employee growth and success.

Hope College provides employees who cannot utilize their summer hours policy with extra vacation time.

HUMANeX offers the opportunity to earn and receive bonuses quarterly, not just annually, which allows recognition for above-and-beyond performances on a regular basis.

During **Hungerford Nichols CPAs + Advisors** busy season, they have on-site yoga and healthy eating lunch & learns.

For Employee Appreciation Week, **Imperial Beverage** has pub crawls, hockey games, 80's Day, wine tasting, and fowling. Every year they have a different glassware theme, which started with the Pint-O-Gram. Each employee received a pint glass with the Imperial logo, filled with notes from employees all over the state.

InsTe Business Solutions, Inc. encourages employees to identify worthy causes and donate, then matches a percentage of their donations.

ITC Incorporated has used its growth in profitability to expand its mission of supporting the community through charitable contributions. Each year, ITC's Caring and Sharing Committee funds and encourages employee participation in multiple community projects. Altogether, ITC contributed \$60,000 to community initiatives in 2018 and \$37,660 in 2019. Additionally, their Charitable Missions time off policy includes paid time off for community involvement with 503c or similar organizations.

ITPartners+ hosts a bi-weekly Beers, Bytes, & Bits networking event at the office and invites those in IT in for a fun evening to decompress, enjoy beer, and exchange ideas.

ITS Partners LLC encourages all employees, nationally and locally, to work with Habitat for Humanity or a local organization close to their heart, and offers up to two weeks of paid leave to participate in community charitable work.

John Ball Zoo proudly offers a free benefits package as one of their options; paid 12-week paternity, adoption, or maternity leave; free membership for the employee and their family; free tuition or certification reimbursement; 401k participation for part-time and full-time employees with profit sharing; Ulliance EAP; free vision and dental insurance.

Kalamazoo Community Foundation developed and hired their first-ever Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), to provide leadership inside the organization, to expand the organization-wide plan for DEI and anti-racism work, support ARTT, and lead the planning for DEI training and development for staff and the board of trustees.

Kent Power established three engagement groups, with a mission of a more employee-centric work place, to focus on culture, wellness, and giving back to the community. These groups raised thousands of dollars for Relay for Life and challenged co-workers to shed hundreds of pounds; they have also provided leadership opportunities for aspiring individuals.

Being an employee-owned company, **Kessler's Diamonds Center** has a great retirement program and 401K match, along with impeccable training to every new employee, based on Stephen Covey's 7 Habits that team members live by.

At **Kevin Toler & Associates**, every year their entire company reads a book together and uses that as a common language to help align our vision and foster autonomous decision-making. They have a dedicated data collector to measure what matters and establish a weekly cadence of iterative experimentation to improve our results. Monthly They conduct start/stop/keep reviews and require 15% be stopped or outsourced to keep us all focused on waking alongside our clients.

Keyser Insurance Group employees are given encouragement and recognition for their achievements on the spot, to show appreciation.

Knight Watch, Inc. has implemented a distribution of Strength Finder tests to all new employees. This test identifies individual strengths that employees can focus on to maintain a successful work life.

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The company owners at **Koops** implemented the Koops Kares Assistance PTO fund, available to Team Members who are experiencing difficult times. Team Members are allowed to give unused PTO to the fund.

KSS Enterprises BIG ROCKS and WolfPack meetings and notes have helped create better communication, awareness, and vision for their team members. They spark ideas and additional conversation with the team.

L3Harris' implementation of a 9/80 Work Schedule provides employees the ability to maintain a work life balance and it's also a best practice when recruiting new hires.

At **LaFleur Marketing**, all employees are encouraged to spend at least one hour per week on professional development – whether listening to a webinar, attending a workshop or conference, or taking an online class. Their team also regularly attends Creative Mornings as a group to glean inspiration from local community members.

Lake Michigan Credit Union increased their HSA match on all high deductible plans to \$600 single and \$900 double and family (\$100 per enrolled employee) and offer a fully company-funded Defined Benefit Pension, along with a 401K plus match to save for retirement.

One of **Lakeshore Advantage's** core values is Work Hard/Laugh Often. They believe each employee is the CEO of their own responsibilities and their team flexes their schedule as needed. This allows them to participate in life outside of the organization and helps them to still achieve goals and objectives.

Since implementing an EOS (Entrepreneurial Operating System), **Lakewood Construction** sales have increased 8%, with profitability up 80%. People, Profit, Planet (Community) has been a unifying way to connect everyone to the process and share their success.

Legacy Trust has succession plans at all levels of the organization; all employees have position-based goals, in addition to individual development plans. Managers meet quarterly with employees to discuss progress on those goals and they offer opportunities for formal and informal mentoring.

Legal Copy presents a weekly question to employees to promote team interaction and team spirit. They offer a 100% casual dress code, from shorts to jeans and t-shirts to hoodies; flex scheduling; paid volunteer days; and provide a plethora of free cereal and milk options daily to all employees, along with monthly catered lunches and birthday treat celebrations.

The **Life EMS** unique situation in the EMS industry is that their associates bid and change their work schedules every six months. This provides each associate an opportunity to have a schedule that fits the changing needs of their family or other personal issues as life changes occur. During orientation, all new hires go through a training class on diversity and inclusion. This class focuses on the idea that we are all different – skin color, gender, ethnicity – we are each unique.

Macatawa Bank offers a two-year leadership development program to give candidates access to many senior leaders in the organization, during which they receive a mentor and quickly become relevant talent for the organization. This program is accelerating the talent growth within the organization.

Mel Trotter redesigned their performance evaluation process to include assessing employees in three areas, along with a greater focus on employee strengths, rather than areas of improvement needed. They made the performance evaluation process paperless to save time and make the entire process more efficient. In addition to their standard practices, MTM does not have the felony box on their employment applications and makes a genuine effort to hire people with a criminal history, to actively support and promote prison re-entry into the workplace.

When it comes to recruitment at **Mercantile Bank**, they actively look at a number of sources, including MIWorks, The Urban League, Asian Professionals Organization, or the West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, along with referrals from existing staff, Career Fairs at local universities (GVSU, MSU, Davenport & more), job postings at local universities or local newspapers.

Metro Health decided to revise their dress code policy and staff feedback has been positive, with 74% agreed that the policy changes made a positive impact in their work areas and 64% said the changes also improved their overall job satisfaction, while 58% were more likely to recommend Metro Health to a friend or colleague because of the recent dress code changes.

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The CEO of **Michigan First Credit Union** holds a monthly breakfast with randomly selected team members to solicit feedback on their Michigan First experience. He uses this information to determine appropriate action plans for improvements or enhancements to their current business practices and model.

Michigan Software's coaching program uses the Sticky Note game and allows team members to grow personally as well as professionally. Employees pick any goals, from running a marathon, to going to a learning conference, to taking time to lead a Girls Who Code event, and the company will pay for it.

Every team member from **Micro Visions, Inc.** has regular access to the president of the company, who welcomes and encourages discussion, ideas, improvements, conversation, feedback, etc. Many positive changes occur due to the input of Micro Visions' team members.

Miedema Auctioneering has an unlimited unpaid time off policy, where employees can take unpaid time off if they need to. Fridays are their busiest days, so they offer a catered lunch for all employees working in their warehouse.

In their volunteer time off program, Give 2 Get, **Mill Steel Company** organizes community outreach opportunities for associates and rewards points for participation. The points can be redeemed for additional vacation days.

Throughout the month, if a **MINDSCAPE** employee notices another team member doing an exceptional job, they can nominate them for the U-Rock Award by clicking a link on their intranet home page and filling out a short form. Then, at their monthly staff meetings, everyone votes anonymously for who deserves it most, and the winner receives \$100 cash, along with a super heavy rock they'll autograph and display on their desk for the next month.

MSU Federal Credit Union has an Employee Assistance Program for their team. Through this program, employees have access to nutrition information, mental health information, resources for new parents, and so much more! They can even have their provider work to find day care and mental health professionals that meet their criteria. This is a great resource for employees who do not know where to begin their search.

New Holland Brewing has company-paid Stop and Taste events and allows for many fellowship events as a team or as a team with their families. Their recognition happy hours are well attended quarterly events, allowing the team to celebrate each other. They also have "family meals" and say it is amazing to see how much relationship building can happen when you just sit down and eat a meal together.

At **Northpointe Bank**, each quarter their President and CEO, Chuck Williams, meets with all new hires during "Breakfast with Chuck." During this hour-long session, new hires hear about the company's vision and strategic plans directly from their Founder and CEO. Participants are given time to ask any questions they desire. These sessions are viewed as a critical opportunity to impart the company's corporate DNA to new employees. Attendees leave these breakfasts informed, empowered, and inspired.

Nugent Builders Inc. has a "You Nailed It" program for their annual employee event. They found this new practice to be very well received and a wonderful way for the team to recognize and learn about each other. It's fun and there are a lot of laughs and stories that otherwise might not be shared.

Nulty Insurance has a Culture Club, which is made up of a cross-section of new and tenured employees from all departments of their organization. This team meets regularly to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their culture and then makes plans and recommendations on how to strengthen and improve it.

OMNI Community Credit Union developed and implemented a "Developing Leaders" program to motivate team members who are interested in growing within the organization.

OptiMed Health Partners have bi-weekly team huddles to communicate opportunities and successes to all employees. The CEO/COO and Directors all attend to share insight and keep employees up to date on happenings. On a quarterly basis, senior leadership holds a lunch 'n learn to present their performance to goal, what's needed to close the gap, and then opens a discussion around creative ideas on how to get there.

OsborneKlein offers monthly volunteer hours to their staff to not only go out and volunteer, but to also get to know the organizations and develop relationships with the community.

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OST (Open Systems Technologies) has an app for employees to give shout-outs to colleagues for a number of things, ranging from landing a new client to receiving a high score on customer satisfaction surveys or receiving positive remarks from clients.

At **PADNOS**, they have a Dependent Scholarship program. When employees have worked at PADNOS for at least three years and their child attends a college in Michigan or Indiana (where PADNOS has facilities), PADNOS will pay 75% of their college tuition, as long as they maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA.

Paragon D&E has implemented a STOP Safety program, the philosophy of which is that all injuries are preventable and while employees were skeptical at first, they have observed a change toward belief and an actual reduction in on-the-job accidents since implementing the program. The program includes 6 weeks of 1-hour training sessions, in person safety observations, and it works to create a work environment free from blame. The implementation takes a large investment, but the changes achieved in culture, reduction in injuries, and employee satisfaction have been more than worth it.

Pella Windows & Doors by Horne focus on getting to know their employees as individuals. The owner writes personalized birthday and anniversary cards for every employee. Every employee sits down with him for an hour within their first few weeks of orientation to get to know each other.

Each year **Plante Moran** hosts a firm conference where all employees are provided with transportation, food, and lodging to come together to celebrate their unique culture.

Procare Landscape Management Inc. has worked hard over the last three years to have their employees adopt their values by communicating them through Friday morning meetings, open book management, and a quarterly state of the union breakfast.

Progressive AE has a team social committee called the C.R.E.W that schedules fun events for employees and their families. Events include "Grilling Friday" events out on the deck, an annual social (dinner) event, Roller and Ice Skating, Craig's Cruisers, White Caps ball games, softball games, family picnics, Spirit Week for Charity, tailgaters, family game nights, scavenger hunts, ugly sweater contests, putting contests, chili cook offs, etc. .

At **Red Level Group**, the goal is to have their employees invested and work together to be proud representatives of the company's values. They continually implement new ideas to help maintain and grow a happy environment while maintaining their values, and they make sure Red Level always puts their employees first.

Rehmann recently implemented a one-stop shop recognition platform that enables their associates and leaders to recognize each other in real time via their laptop or mobile app, with a mobile optimized newsfeed that showcases the recognition. In addition, the recognition ties directly back to the associate's performance management profile, so recognition is easily taken into consideration when evaluating performance.

Revel gives all employees a subscription to Unruly Brewing Mug Club to showcase their appreciation of hard work

Robroy Enclosures continues to support and give back to the Belding Community, as well as to the nation as a whole. They donate regularly to Special Olympics, American Cancer Association, Boy Scouts of America, and Toys for Tots.

Rockford Construction offers it's team members specially allocated days for family or volunteer time that are as easy to use as regular PTO.

Schupan & Sons, Inc. provides guaranteed low interest loans of up to \$2,500 for employees who are unable to obtain credit through a conventional loan process. Seeing their employees succeed is something they feel very passionate about and they continuously strive for new ways to see them shine.

Seaman's Mechanical has many functions throughout the year, including providing tickets for a company outing at the White Caps in the summer and Berlin Raceway in the fall.

Team members at **SecurAlarm Systems, Inc.** donated toys to the Santa's Workshop at Ronald McDonald House to support the families that were living there over Christmas. In addition, they bake cookies for the residents, make residents dinner, and make Mother's Day cards for the mothers residing at the house around Mother's Day.

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Service Express, Inc (SEI) encourages employees to have work-life balance by giving employees two days off a year at full pay to volunteer in the community, giving all employees their birthday off, and offering a 50% reimbursement of gym membership fees.

At **Service Professor** every January, they ask every employee to write down on a napkin at least four goals, two personal and two professional. They call this their "napkin promises" and they pull them out throughout the year to ensure the individuals are taking the necessary steps to achieve those goals.

At **Shefit Operating Company LLC's** monthly communication meetings, they hand out a "Pound the Rock" award. This award is given at Management's discretion to a team member believed to have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

Sherpack's team members loves their quarterly events. Past experiences have included paint ball, a casino party with catered food and an open bar, a city-wide scavenger hunt, and a company picnic at a lake house.

Soil & Structures, Inc. employees donate to the charity of their choice. In doing this, they have been introduced to many smaller charities in the area that don't have marketing budgets, but are in need of assistance.

Throughout the year at **Southwest Michigan First**, their engagement coordinator energizes the team with little surprises along the way. Last year, their team members walked into the office on select mornings to find a champagne bottle on their desks to celebrate a big win, a red mailbox in which to collect cards on Valentine's Day, hot sauce in honor of national chicken wing day and a miniature bottle of orange vodka on Halloween with a sign that read: "You've Been Boo-zed!"

SpartanNash collaborates annually with more than 5,000 community partners to support military heroes and advance hunger relief, food waste reduction, and health and wellness, ensuring they provide support to all organizations throughout the communities they serve.

Specialty Eye Institute employees are offered free continued education classes and opportunities for fun and games. During the summer months, they offer a Tigers game event and employee picnic, with all costs paid. They also have an annual Christmas party with dinner, champagne toast, formal entertainment, photo booth, and DJ for dancing.

SpendMend features monthly potlucks, charity events, a game/break room filled with ping pong, shuffleboard, and more. They celebrate employee birthdays, weddings, and baby showers. SpendMend has multiple themed days for spirit week, Christmas, big game rivalries, and more.

Spherion has an employee recognition program for community involvement, donations to local charities and/or charitable events, and a company-wide fundraising drive. In addition, a paid day is offered, to be used for community involvement/charity.

St. Ann's Home provides heavily-subsidized child care onsite so parents can check up on their baby or young child during the day, have lunch with them, or participate in an activity with them. In addition, they have created a mother's room, that offers comfort and privacy for mothers to connect with their babies during their work day.

Star Truck Rentals sends a gift when their employees have their first child, as well as gifts of condolence for hospitalizations and deaths. When life presents their employees with obstacles, they try to be there to help each employee through them, whether that means a company loan, time off from work, accommodated working hours, clothes, or donations. Whatever the need, they try to help their employees succeed.

One area at **Suburban Inns** that has become a focus is offering as many of their benefits as possible to ALL employees, including part time. Those benefits include earned time off, 401k, travel discounts, food discounts, pool usage, Awardco points, service bonuses, spot bonuses, holiday pay, fitness center partnerships, discounted public transportation, and more.

Sun Title Agency hosts monthly staff meetings where employees from all over the company gather to meet and learn about new staff members in person, learn about the latest company news, celebrate milestone anniversaries and accomplishments, and ask questions directly of their owners

2020 WEST MICHIGAN'S BEST & BRIGHTEST BEST PRACTICES CONTINUED

Sunset Retirement Communities & Services has a MySuccess program to offer classes to help build personal and employment skills, such as basic computer skills, financial management, and budgeting, credit repair, family nutrition, leadership and problem solving, health and wellness, etc. Employees have used this program to overcome personal life barriers and the organization has seen great outcomes from employees.

At **Terryberry**, they believe that a healthy family life is important. Terryberry funds contributions for newborns and provides new families with a Newborn Welcome Basket. They also offer telecommuting opportunities to help employees with work-life balance.

Thacker Sleight PC accommodates flexible schedules, working remotely, and even leased a car for an employee when she needed help. They offer opportunities for their team to de-stress together and they plan company trips that focus not only on work, but on having fun, too. Their team's physical and mental health is essential to the firms' overall success, and they are committed to a happy, healthy, and productive work environment.

The **C2 Group** continues to expand its employee offerings with the introduction of an Employee Assistance Program in 2020. This program, offered at no expense to C2 employees and immediate family members, offers confidential, around-the-clock services and resources related to mental health, substance abuse, finances, marital assistance, and other personal needs.

The Kendall Group provides scholarships to their part-time owner-associates or children of owner-associates. Five new scholarships are awarded annually for up to four years of funds for the recipients.

The Wiser Financial Group surprises their employees with special outings throughout the year, after challenging work goals at met. Outings include shopping trips to Grand Rapids with a gift card, a day at the beach on the coast of Lake Michigan, or tickets to a sold-out show.

Total Quality Logistics learned early on that celebrating success fosters camaraderie and leads to even bigger successes down the road. One of their most treasured celebrations is Beer Drops. Every time they break a record, they celebrate in true TQL-style with a beer toast from their CEO and anyone who wants to participate (limit one per employee, age 21 and over).

TownerPinkster created CAAT, their Culture Action Advisory Team. The team focuses on gaining feedback from employees in designing their culture programs and activities for the year, including wellness, social, fun, sustainability, charitable giving, and more!

The Town & Country Group family believes everyone is important to the company; everyone has trust in the company and is held to the same standard and expectations. Leadership is available 24/7, so every employee knows management wants to help solve any challenges, address any concerns, or offer praise and encouragement at all times.

Triangle Associates, Inc. has a Monday Morning Jam Session (a brief 15 minutes, tops) to start their week off, which consists of the entire office getting together to learn what each department is working towards in the coming week. The session is led by senior leaders and it allows their team to learn how each of them can support every department.

Trillium offers an Employee Assistance Program that focuses on the stress of dealing with work/life balance issues. The program provides information and assistance to employees that need counseling for themselves or family members, legal or financial planning services, beneficiary and funeral planning services, and estate guidance. The program also includes a travel assistance program that provides emergency medical and personal services to employees traveling more than one hundred miles away from their home or out of the country.

Twistthink has "U-Talk" meetings with c-suite and their teammates. These meetings consist of no more than 10 teammates at one time. They create an open agenda of topics to discuss and allow teammates to share their thoughts on strategic initiatives. Last year they had a U-Talk to discuss feedback from their anonymous surveys and the strategic initiatives they created based on the areas of weaknesses, as well as a U-Talk based on Twistthink's future location plans. They believe this is the best way to allow each teammate to have a voice.

2020 WEST MICHIGAN'S BEST & BRIGHTEST BEST PRACTICES CONTINUED

The **UFP Technologies, Inc.** team gathers quarterly for team building events that encourage members from different areas that might not regularly work together to partner up for an office activity, event, or game. This allows for team members to build stronger relationships while having fun!

Yearly, **UMRC & Porter Hills** benefit vendors and offerings are reviewed and analyzed to determine the best available options that provide solid coverage for the least out-of-pocket expense for our employees. A variety of insurance options, including medical, dental, 401k, life, LTD, STD, tuition reimbursement and discount, flexible spending accounts and supplemental insurance are offered to meet the needs of their diverse workforce.

United Bank of Michigan has implemented a program to positively impact the overall wellbeing of our employees, called "Be the Best U." This initiative includes onsite fitness classes, wellness workshops, walking challenges, a bowling team and a softball team. They provide many resources and webinars on financial wellness, protecting children online, meditation, elder care, and mental health.

VisionQuest holds monthly focus groups with employees representing all departments. This group has lunch with upper management to discuss concerns and successes and work to grow the company.

With being in an industry that spends a lot of time on the phone, **West Michigan Transport** provides a fully stocked kitchen with beverages, snacks, breakfast and lunch items. This eliminates stress and makes life a little easier for them.

West Michian Whitecaps has a Tarp policy, unique to their organization. During normal business hours, their Tarp team is all front office staff. For non-business hours, they have two teams that are on-call. As a reward for being a member of a Tarp team, employees are given a couple extra days of vacation.

Willis Law attorneys volunteer every week at the local homeless shelter, to help those with legal issues who do not have the funds to pursue them on their own.

Windemuller Electric kicked off Art of Orange for their 2020 theme, which is based on three pillars of excellence with their client experience delivery across the organization. They believe that Art of Orange is going to elevate the company by aligning and empowering their employees to make the right decisions to deliver an awesome experience every time they interact with a customer (internally or externally).

Worksighted has implemented a lunch program which brings in a local caterer three times a week to provide lunch to all employees interested in eating healthy, to encourage healthy eating and mental wellness.

WSI uses an electronic recognition and rewards system to virtually shout-out coworkers and award points that can be turned in for gift cards and prizes.

X-Rite Pantone associates have an extensive list of training and development courses available at their fingertips, through what they call Danaher University (DBSU). Danaher has an entire Leadership Development & Learning team devoted to crafting the best fit trainings for staff at different levels in their career.

Yeo & Yeo CPA's & Business Consultants has an Employee Wellness Program that recently offers onsite Yoga (YeoGa) classes and in chair massage therapy. They have a Fitbit program that continues to have monthly challenges for individuals or teams.

Zeigler Auto Group brings five to eight guest speakers in throughout the year with their Zeigler University Guest Speaker Series. They encourage their employees to attend these sessions to learn professionally, as well as personally.