

*welcome*  
**new members**

- B2 Outlet Stores
- B & B Services
- The Green Scene of Marshall
- CottonTales BC
- The Fountain Clinic
- Chmura Orthodontics
- Café Rica
- Salon K
- Fat Mike's Barbecue
- Staples, Inc.
- WACO Kitchen
- Horizon Bank
- Island Heat Tanning

*our* **vision**

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce is the premier business association whose influence, solutions, and networks drive economic growth in the Battle Creek area, enabling businesses, community and people to prosper in an ever-changing economy.

*our* **mission**

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce will provide the best in member services and aggressive business advocacy to create a climate for employer growth and a prosperous community for all.



BATTLE CREEK AREA  
CHAMBER



**PRESIDENT'S  
CORNER**

By Kara Beer, IOM, MPA

We've never faced a pandemic of this scale in our lifetimes. Add to that global economic impacts that will likely linger for months or even years.

What has become clear is that the role and value of chambers of commerce has never been more crucial. Not just to get our communities through the pandemic, but to help drive economic recovery far into the future.

While referencing the 2020 adopted strategic plan of the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce, I'm reminded of how while the strategies and tasks may be adjusted now, we here at the Chamber are having impact with the community on a multitude of ways daily.

**IMPACT STATEMENT OF THE BATTLE CREEK AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce connects and empowers business and community professionals to have the courage and confidence to be catalytic leaders in addressing their business and communities' greatest issues.

**Our 4 Key Priority Areas**

- Be a **Center of Excellence** for Business. Be the number one resource for best practice and innovative resources and information for the business community in the greater Battle Creek region and Calhoun County.
- **Storytelling.** Help business professionals craft their narratives, and serve as a community platform and megaphone for business success stories.
- **Community Advocacy.** Provide the information, connections and services that will help businesses and organizations proactively address the greatest challenges within their businesses/organizations, so they can best promote, serve, and grow within our region.
- **Organizational Excellence.** Ensure the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce is the best organization it can be for staff and members.

So many of you have been innovating through these challenging times. Our team is inspired. And, we know continuing to share best practices and innovations - and connecting as a community to build our future - will make us all stronger. Our Chamber team will continue to need grit, passion, innovation, and a collaborative mindset to move the economy and community forward.

I will go more into detail of each of our key priority areas and how we're having or looking to have impact in our community over the next year throughout this publication.

*Kara Beer*



## member anniversaries

### 80 Year Anniversary

Atlas Sales, Inc.

### 45 Year Anniversary

Dickman Road Veterinary Clinic  
Omega Castings, Inc.

### 40 Year Anniversary

Prebish Chiropractic Centre, PLC  
Recognition, Inc.

### 35 Year Anniversary

Battle Creek Country Club

### 20 Year Anniversary

Geislinger Corporation

### 15 Year Anniversary

Holiday Inn Battle Creek

### 10 Year Anniversary

Red Lobster  
TRMI, Inc.

### 5 Year Anniversary

A Forever Recovery  
Advantage Living Center  
Duckworth Brothers, Inc.  
Evergreen Senior Care & Rehab Center  
Phillips Custom Building  
Shaw Communication  
Twin Valley Pharmacy, Inc.

### 1 Year Anniversary

MCS Marketing  
Grand Valley State University BC  
Regional Outreach Center  
The Botanist  
Trisha Elliot  
Strategic Aligned Solutions

## 2021'S WAYS TO ENGAGE

Share YOUR Talents & Ideas for Impactful Results

Looking for new ways this year to engage and build your network with other Chamber members? Have you considered joining and participating within one of the many committee opportunities offered to you and your employees as a member? The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to have the opportunity to bring together hundreds of our members during its monthly committee meetings. These exclusive committees bring together so much talent within our network ranging from community advocates, law enforcement, military, government/advocacy, marketing, and membership/events. The amount of idea sharing and insight within these groups is priceless.

Here's a list of the six different committees that fit the needs of our members:

- **Ambassadors Committee** | meets the third Thursday of each month: 1 p.m.
- **Silent Observer Committee** | meets the third Wednesday of each month: 8 a.m.
- **Military Affairs Committee** | meets the fourth Wednesday of each month: 3 p.m.
- **Government Affairs, Advocacy & Development Committee** | meets the third Thursday of each month: 10 a.m.
- **Marketing & Communications Committee** | meets the first Tuesday of each month: 3:30 p.m.
- **Membership & Events Committee** | meets the fourth Thursday of each month: 11 a.m.

Please reach out to us about joining if you, or one of your employees, are interested in engaging and making more of an impact within 2021 with our members. All committees will meet on a virtual basis for now. To learn more, email [office@battlecreek.org](mailto:office@battlecreek.org).

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### John Banks

Chair, Motor Shop Electrical  
Construction Co.

### Denise Jones

Immediate Past Chair,  
Graphix 2 Go

### Dr. Emily Bandeen

Secretary, Bandeen Orthodontics

### Joey Vernon

Treasurer, CTS Telecom, Inc.

### Debi Southworth

OMNI Community Credit Union

### Jim Lance

Legal Counsel, Kreis, Enderle,  
Hudgins & Borsos P.C.

### Bud Dunn

Atlas Sales, Inc.

### Leah Ortiz

The Arc of Calhoun County

### Michael Miller

Culver's Battle Creek

### Jeremy Wilson

DENSO Manufacturing

### Elishae S. Johnson,

PhD, LPC, CAADA  
HelpNet Bronson  
Healthcare Group

### John Gayda

Ernst & Young

### Shawn Holtz

110th Wing Commander

### Steve Frisbie

Lifecare Ambulance  
Calhoun County  
Commissioner, Chair

## BATTLE CREEK AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE STAFF

**Kara E. Beer** – President

**Billy Beers** – Director of Marketing & Communications

**Jennifer Blank** – Director of Finance

**Beth Pung** – Operation Specialist

### Chamber Refund & Cancellation Policy

Please visit [battlecreek.org](http://battlecreek.org) for our complete policy details. Editorial Policy: Articles written by outside authors do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce. The position of the Chamber will be clearly stated where applicable. The Chamber reserves the right to reject advertising based on content and does not accept advertising that conflicts with the mission or position of the Chamber. The advertising of products or services in the Insight does not necessarily represent endorsement by the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce. The Insight is published quarterly by the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce.

Editor: Kara Beer, President



## A LETTER FROM 2019 – 2020 BOARD CHAIR JOHN BANKS

Hello Battle Creek Chamber Members,

It has been an honor serving as Board Chair for the 2019-2020 term, one that will be recorded in history for the social and economic devastation caused by the COVID 19 Pandemic.

We started the year with a record-breaking fall season, five-star reaccreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a very successful Fall into the Arts Festival, and a strong winter season that delivered a new logo design, strategic plan, and strategic brand. Then, over a few days, major events announced cancellation, schools and businesses closed overnight, non-essential services closed, and businesses faced a very uncertain future.

Despite these obstacles, and perhaps, in part, due to them, Chamber staff forged ahead and let nothing get in the way. Kara Beer, President, Jennifer Blank, Finance Director, and the staff took on the new challenge of responding to COVID and supporting the membership in the face of unprecedented challenges. By starting with the mantra of relevant, reliable, and timely delivery of information, the Chamber launched a comprehensive web resource for members. Staff reached out multiple ways to inform members and the community of tools available, including the following (though there were many more!):

- We produced and shared over 200 COVID-19 based updates with news, information on resources available to businesses to help them cope with the impact of the virus – related shutdown, as well as regular community news.
- We made more than 100 different points of contact with local, state, and federal legislators to communicate business hardships and discuss possible solutions. We also joined with our partners at the state and U.S. Chambers, Associations across the U.S. to co-sign numerous letters promoting pro-business legislation to help our members.

I'm optimistic this town will emerge stronger from this crisis, partly thanks to the Chamber. The Chamber staff have been working relentlessly for us, the membership, to succeed during these difficult times. Please give a cheer to them.

The following quote sums up my year as Board Chair: "Surround yourself with people that inspire you and you will not only grow - you will soar."  
–Mimi Ikonn

Sincerely,

John Banks,  
Owner, Motor Shop Electrical Construction Company  
Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce, Board Chair, 2019-2020




*together, we can save lives & provide*  
**SAVINGS FOR  
YOUR EMPLOYEES**

**ATTENTION: Employers & HR Professionals—**  
LifeCare Ambulance is proud to partner with you in providing your company employees with **a great benefit at a reduced price!** Health insurance plans often don't cover the full cost of ambulance service when required for emergency medical needs. Member Plus through LifeCare Ambulance—normally offered to individuals and families for \$42 per year—is being made available at a discounted **Business-to-Business Rate of \$30 per year!**

Call **888.463.7587** today to learn more.

**Member Plus** (previously MemberCare)

[www.lifecareems.org](http://www.lifecareems.org)



## PROMOTING, SERVING, & GROWING OUR REGION WITH COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

*The collective insight of our organization's leadership is designed to produce lasting impact on the individuals, businesses and organizations we serve. The impact statement is a guiding principle in our work:*

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce connects and empowers business and community professionals to have the courage and confidence to be catalytic leaders in addressing their business and communities' greatest issues.

The third priority area is **Community Advocacy**. We aspire to provide the information, connections and services that will help businesses and organizations proactively address the greatest challenges within their businesses/organizations, so they can best promote, serve, and grow within our region.

- Promote and encourage Chamber value propositions that go beyond transactional to transformational, where we're a part of the solutions to the greatest problems in our communities.
- Expanding training, best practices and resources to elevate Chamber capabilities in government affairs/public policy, building public-private partnerships, various ways of economic development, workforce and talent pipeline, education attainment, and other areas such as social issues.
- Survey and build on our Chamber ChitChat on WBCCK and Rap with Your Reps series to determine what resources and services will best assist our members in these areas.
- Build out information and legislative agendas yearly that influence and engage the public sector with assistance of the Government Affairs Committee.
- Build opportunities for like-minded professionals to convene and collaborate around the most pressing issues, and form coalitions to address them.

As an organization, we'll work to elevate the capabilities and promote the long successful history of our Chamber of Commerce so that we may best promote, serve and improve our communities in which our members live, work and play.

To learn more about the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce, or to join our membership, please contact the office at 269.962.4076 or visit [battlecreek.org](http://battlecreek.org).



## WHAT'S UP WEDNESDAY'S

### *2021's Virtual Pop-ins to Engage with Us*

Is your membership up for renewal? Have you received a call or voicemail from Director of Marketing & Communications Billy Beers about an opportunity to connect with us via Zoom for What's Up Wednesday's? Now, are you asking yourself . . . what is What's Up Wednesday's and why am I being invited!?!

When your membership is up for renewal, you'll receive a call from the Chamber's Director of Marketing & Communications Billy Beers inviting you to connect with us virtually. This is an opportunity for YOU as our valued member to connect with us, our ambassadors, along with other members renewing their membership around the same time. It allows us the chance to hear how you and your business/industry are doing while providing you with valuable updates regarding your membership within the year to come. Plus, you can build your network within this quick 30 minute virtual event with staff, ambassadors and members.

How does this work? And, do I need to attend for my business as I received the voicemail?

Great questions! After you've received a call from the Chamber you'll be sent a calendar invite including the Zoom meeting link to attend. And, anyone from your business can participate. Simply share the calendar invite with who from your business/organization that you'd like to engage with us and other members.

As your membership renewal date approaches, we encourage you to watch for us to reach out by phone and email for your opportunity to participate in the Chamber's What's Up Wednesday's opportunity to connect. If you have questions prior to this, contact Billy Beers at [bbeers@battlecreek.org](mailto:bbeers@battlecreek.org).



## SPECTACULAR AMBASSADORS

### Ambassador Leadership & Appreciation

This past year, as always, the work of the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce was anchored in partnership and collaboration. Your Chamber has stood with our local business community for over 108 years. We've advocated for Battle Creek's local businesses during times of growth, recession, war and change. And, we continue to advocate for business now, providing a strong voice of clarity through the uncertainties and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During these uncertain times, the Chamber's Ambassador committee, made up of over 20-member business professionals, has helped the Chamber's Board of Directors and Staff expand partnerships spanning across the city and entire county. They've stood with the Chamber as we launched several initiatives addressing opportunities, inclusion and diversity across the

entire region. They're committed to continue advocating for your business and a growth-focused economic environment.

"I'd like to thank each and every one of our Ambassadors, and their employers, for continuing to bring their professional expertise, talents, and willingness to share ideas to every opportunity that is presented to them by being an Ambassador with the Chamber," said President Kara Beer. "They've proven time and time again that they Believe in Battle Creek and are willing to roll up their sleeves to support and advocate for local businesses in the greater Battle Creek area."

For more information on the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce's Ambassador committee, or to be connected/referred to one of our Ambassadors, please call 269.962.4076 to speak with Director of Marketing & Communications Billy Beers.



**Cassandra Murry**  
Advia Credit Union



**Jenny Andrew**  
Squirrel Hollow Golf Course



**Shane Cope**  
Comeria



**Sue Smith**  
Comeria



**Maryanne Eddy**  
Battle Creek Family Chiropractic



**BJ Etheridge**  
Berkshire Hathaway Home Serv.



**Carrie Van Deventer Doupounce**  
CL Van Deventer Insurance



**Emily Gould**  
Impact Solutions



**Noris Linsey**  
Realtor



**Savannah Hatfield**  
Pearse Realty, Inc.



**Lynn Gray Ward**  
Battle Creek Comm. Foudation



**Christi Losinski**  
Ganton Senior Communities



**Jacob Miller**  
Edward Jones Investments



**Karen Rial**  
Partners Insurance Agency of SW MI, Inc.



**Denise Wilkie**  
Lighthouse Title Group



**Allison Schwarz**  
CL Van Deventer Insurance



**Gina Anderson**  
OMNI Community Credit Union



**Nicole Kasper**  
OMNI Community Credit Union

#### Not Pictured:

**Gerrit ter Avest**  
John ter Avest Agency, Inc.

**Timothy Ballinger**  
SERVPRO of N. Calhoun Co.

**Stephanie Breitbach**  
Ermisch Travel of BC, Inc.

# members business spotlight



Over the past 15 years, **B & B Services** has provided customers with fast and dependable repairs for their heavy duty truck needs. We are a mobile mechanic business available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We are based out of Marshall, but service approximately a 50 mile radius. We have trained mechanics available for roadside repairs on heavy duty trucks and trailers. We meet driver's on site to make

necessary repairs and get them back on the road as quickly as possible. We also provide Mobile Fleet Maintenance. This can include DOT Inspections, Preventative Maintenance Inspections and regular care as needed. We sell heavy duty truck parts and trailer parts for most makes and models. If we don't stock it, we can order it!



**B2 Outlet Stores** started in 2014, and wow have we grown! B2 was originally an online auction that formed into a storefront, we now have 23 locations and the newest

addition to the B2 Family was opened in Battle Creek on November 18. Heading into the year 2020 no one could have expected the ups and downs everyone has encountered. We feel so blessed to be able to open a new store during a pandemic, something that seemed impossible during the first month of quarantine. We will always continue to fulfill our mission and vision of B2 by giving back to local and global causes with every purchase made! Come shop for a cause at our Battle Creek store located on Beckley Road in Minges Plaza!



**Impact Solutions** grew around the idea of helping companies strengthen their image by making sure their brand was always presented effectively and continually captured their true personality. Your brand must shout the

virtues of your company, its products, people, and values to the market. But shouting takes a strong voice, and that's what Impact Solutions brings to the party.

A voice that reaches into many departments of your organization and brightens up all the details of their presentation. Your literature. Your corporate apparel. Your displays. Your promotional products. Your labels. Your mailers. Your signage. Your forms. Every last nuance needed to give your brand the power to persuade.

And amazingly, these items and more can all be handled with our Brand Impact Technology (B.I.T.) to assure simple ordering workflow, inventory and distribution management, cost-center reporting and summary billing that achieves more effective and efficient control of your marketing and operational assets.

*No worries, just results.*



**The Battle Creek Central High School Career Academies** are preparing students in our community to graduate career, college, and community ready. The most recent exciting addition to the school experience is the newly constructed Battle Creek Central Academy of Health and

Human Services Health Care Simulation Lab. Construction of the new space was funded by a Michigan Department of Education Marshall Plan for Talent Grant thanks to the support of several community organizations through the BCPATHWAYS4SUCCESS consortium.

The new simulation lab gives students in the BCCHS Career Academies Nursing and Health Care pathways access to a facility designed in accordance with training site requirements for Certified Nursing Assistant and Emergency Medical Technician certification programs! The simulation lab also contains a replica of an ambulance, including stretchers and other equipment used by Emergency Medical Technicians, offering students the opportunity to gain valuable hands-on experience while working with highly qualified instructors.



Toys. Games. Great Ideas. That's our motto at **CottonTales**. We are the toy store located in Lakeview Square Mall (near Barnes & Noble and Dunham's). For updated hours, visit the store's Facebook page or email [cottontalesinspired@gmail.com](mailto:cottontalesinspired@gmail.com).



CottonTales offers high-quality, natural toys. We specialize in items for infants through elementary age. There are selections for older kids. Owner Kari Kidder-McQuown and family are friendly, and committed to making sure kids and families in the Battle Creek area get the best toys.

CottonTales invites you to shop small, shop local, and give children the gift of play!



My **Edward Jones** practice has been a much larger presence in the Battle Creek/Kalamazoo community in 2020, partnering with 50 new families and businesses with their financial goals. I continue to serve clients safely face-to-face in my office and virtually through Zoom and WebEx. My focus has and always will be to provide financial strategies for families in

the SW Michigan region by assisting clients with life's transitions and providing a solid financial plan and guidance in times of change. We've all seen quite a bit of change in 2020, which is why it has been and still is more important than ever to review your investment strategy. As community members have been laid off or contemplated retirement and as other financial advisors have stepped away from their responsibilities in helping their clients, we have opened our arms to the opportunity to help them. I've also added a new, amazing member to our staff, named Veronica Laske, who will be helping our clients with any administrative needs. Together, we hope to make 2021 an even bigger success.



**John ter Avest Agency**  
Your Window to Health Care Benefits

Here at **John ter Avest Agency** we specialize in quality Health, Life, and Disability Insurance products from leading insurance companies. Providing affordable Group and Individual coverage programs since

1953 has given us the experience and reputation you can trust. During the sixty-eight years the John ter Avest Agency has been in existence they have credited their success to the unique and pleasant service provided to their clients. It is the hope of the John ter Avest Agency to provide another fifty years of quality service to the Battle Creek community.



If you're ready for a big comeback in 2021, **Kellogg Community College** is the place for you. With students

and employers in mind, KCC continues to enhance online course offerings and virtual services for the Spring 2021 semester, which begins Jan. 19 and runs through May 10. Hundreds of classes are offered in online formats, enabling students to learn at their convenience. At KCC, five programs can be completed almost entirely online, including associate degrees in Arts, Accounting, Administrative Assistant, Business Management and Early Childhood Education.

Student registration information, including links to registration instructions, policies, tuition and fees and other information, is available at [www.kellogg.edu/registration](http://www.kellogg.edu/registration).

Want to meet with an advisor? Schedule an appointment at [kellogg.edu/academic-advising](http://kellogg.edu/academic-advising) or call 269.965.4124 or email [advising@kellogg.edu](mailto:advising@kellogg.edu).

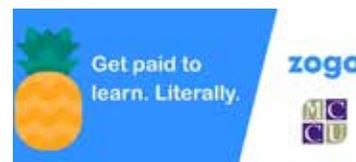


### IHP Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Year

Some may consider 2020 the year to forget, but we remember 2020 as the 25th year that IHP has completed in serving the medical community of Calhoun county and surrounding areas. As a physician organization, we are here to help support member physician practices in delivering high quality, low cost and accessible health care to the community. Throughout the last 25 years, IHP has faced many challenges, but continues to focus on supporting our physicians through the many changes in health care. IHP's dedicated staff provides excellent service through a high touch approach. Although 2020 was a challenging year, we look forward to 2021 and using creativity and innovation to move IHP forward.



**Lighthouse Title Group** has a team of experienced professionals with locations throughout Michigan and Wisconsin. Whether you want to close on a personal real estate property, refinance a distribution warehouse or buy a second home, the Lighthouse Group title team can help no matter where you are located. We understand that no two closings are alike. As your trusted advisor, it is our responsibility to ensure you have the title coverage you need. When you work with us, you benefit from our products and services as well as the top-rate relationships we have with Chicago Title Insurance, Fidelity National Title, Old Republic National Title, First American Title Insurance, Stewart, and WFG National Title Insurance.



**Marshall Community Credit Union** has partnered with Zogo, a leading financial technology company, to bring Zogo's app to its members and communities. The app, which

was developed by a group of Duke University students, guides users through 300+ bite-sized financial educational modules. As users successfully answer questions, they will accumulate points that they can redeem for gift cards (and other rewards).

Eighty-four percent of teens say they look to their parents for information about money, according to a study by Junior Achievement. However, parents often feel unprepared to play this role. In a survey by EVERFI, only 43% of parents felt they were "well prepared" for money conversations. As an alternative, T. Rowe Price reports that 3 out of 4 parents think financial apps are a good way to teach about financial matters.

Download the Zogo app today, using the access code "MCCU." The Zogo app is available at no cost, in both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Users do not have to be a member of MCCU to download, and play, the app.

*continued on pg. 8*

Member Spotlights ...continued



Does your financial institution gift you money each year? **OMNI Community Credit Union** is one of the few financial institutions in the nation to use their profits to give back a cashback rebate to members and help support local communities! We are very grateful and pleased to announce that this year's rebate will be our largest payout ever.

"I don't think many of us have experienced a year like 2020. It was most definitely a challenging year," OMNI CEO Ted Parsons stated. "Giving back to our membership means even more this time. It's gratifying to be able move into the new year with the news that the rebate is happening once again."

Without you, we wouldn't be able to continue this tradition, especially during challenging times. Your loyalty and support enables us to continue the Cashback Rebate program and we are very grateful.



## THE CHAMBER IS YOUR TRUSTED STORYTELLER

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce has experienced a growing membership, healthy member satisfaction ratings, and an explosion of program and engagement numbers and ratings. We want to build on this success and improve our value proposition by serving the needs of our community, now and far into the future. By formalizing a collaborative strategy, and aligning our resources to achieve that, we can enhance the BCACC membership offerings to ensure that we provide the information, counsel, resources, services, training and other benefits to make doing business in the greater Battle Creek area more successful.

As an organization, we'll work to elevate the capabilities and promote the long successful history of our Chamber of Commerce, so that we may best promote, serve and improve our communities in which our members live, work and play.

The Chamber is your trusted **Storyteller**. Aspiring to help business professionals craft their narratives and serve as a community platform and megaphone for business success stories.

Craft communication strategies and overhaul design and function of all Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce communication channels (website, Insight, promotional materials, social media platforms...) for better user experience and to focus more on best-practice stories.

Increase resources, staff expertise, services, and training on storytelling, crafting and sharing value propositions, and other tools to help business hone their narratives.

Promote leaders from within the membership, and staff experts as thought-leaders through public speaking, writing opportunities, traditional and social media engagement and other approaches.

Expand outreach to position Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce as a voice of reason on issues affecting our members, share the value of our Chamber and disseminate success stories for the region.

Continue robust dialogues within and outside of the chamber community about the community brand.



We're here for your business with great solutions at a great value. Our improved plans give flexibility to employees and affordability to you where it's needed most. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network have the award-winning member satisfaction\* you want with the innovation options you need. Learn more about how our improved plans can benefit your business today at [bcbsm.com/employers](http://bcbsm.com/employers).



**\*Ranked #1 in Member Satisfaction among Commercial Health Plans in Michigan.**

For J.D. Power 2020 award information, visit [jdpower.com/awards](http://jdpower.com/awards). Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. W002874

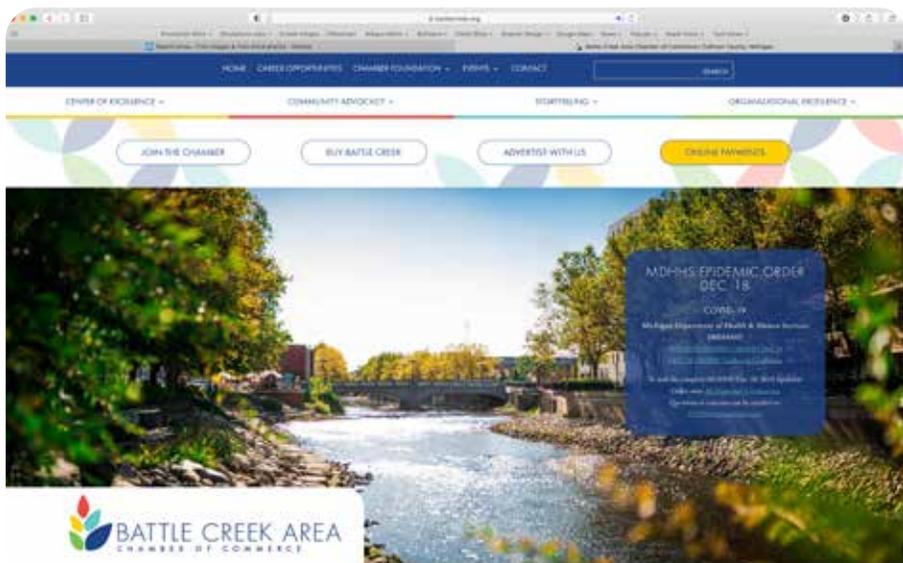


## WELCOME TO OUR VIRTUAL STOREFRONT

*battlecreek.org's ability to inform, engage & connect*

Welcome to the Chamber of Commerce's virtual storefront as we move into 2021. We launched the new battlecreek.org in spring 2020 and have been enhancing the benefits of membership for you ever since. Keeping you informed with the most recent publications, advertising opportunities that create a lasting impression for our members, a new membership directory, and NEW in fall 2020 career opportunities to help members find the talent that they're seeking.

Now, you may be asking yourself, "What else do they have in store?" We're excited to announce that in 2021 you'll have the ability to make payments directly on our website. This benefit impacts our member's efficiency by allowing for payments 24/7. Working remotely has changed the typically 9 – 5 daily work hours which we understand. So in an effort to be more accessible and adaptable to the needs of our members, we're happy to announce online payments for 2021.



Is something missing on our website that you're looking for? Connect with Director of Marketing & Communications Billy Beers and share your ideas. We're constantly looking for ways to improve our services and resources and are excited to hear from you. Email Billy Beers at [bbeers@battlecreek.org](mailto:bbeers@battlecreek.org) or call 269.962.4076.

## *member ribbon cuttings*

### NOVEMBER 6, 2020 – FIRECREEK PROVISIONING CENTER

Chamber Staff and Ambassadors celebrated the Grand Opening of FireCreek Provisioning Center with Ribbon. FireCreek had a live DJ, free food and a local food truck, games for everyone, and tons of giveaways. They also hosted nine vendors. FireCreek has officially gone RECREATIONAL. **846 E. Columbia Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49014**



### NOVEMBER 18, 2020 – B2 OUTLET STORE

Chamber Staff and Ambassadors celebrated the Grand Opening of B2 Outlet Stores with Ribbon. B2 Outlet Stores is located in the Minges Creek Plaza next to Kume Hibachi Steakhouse. **5420 Beckley Road, Suite H, Battle Creek, MI 49015**





## THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

### Connecting Through LinkedIn

We all experience and have an understanding of how powerful social media can be, especially after the year 2020. Within a blink of an eye, we all had to adjust to new social media platforms, step out of our comfort zones, and begin to engage virtually in more ways than we probably ever thought that we would have to. And, look at all of the benefits. Through a Worldwide pandemic we've continued to be able to grow our social networks and resources virtually. Looking back, it's amazing how quickly our network has adapted, and continues to do so.



In 2021, we're encouraging our members to connect with us on one more communications platform through social media which is, LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a powerful tool to include in your 2021 networking goals and opportunities. We as your Chamber are in the business of networking and referrals which goes hand-in-hand with what LinkedIn can provide. We're ramping up the content we post, share and provide to our followers which is why we're asking you to follow us. Don't miss important and impactful information; the opportunity to connect with Chamber staff through yet another platform for questions and referrals; and another outlet to stay informed of upcoming engagement and programming opportunities.

Simply look up Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce on LinkedIn and start following us today!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Well, we along with our members, pivoted for 2020 and we look forward to more pivoting engagement opportunities for the start of 2021. As we mentioned in October, we didn't release our 12-month Calendar of Events as we've done in previous years due to COVID-19 restrictions on events. However, you've pivoted with us (again, not a dance move . . . just the verb we've been using in 2020) by engaging and showing up virtually to a numerous amount of event/programming opportunities since the start of our fiscal year. We still don't know exactly what the future holds, but rest assure that your Chamber is working diligently to offer you impactful engagement opportunities to help grow your business and your employees. Here's a recap as to what to watch for within the next few months:

**Monday's** are for Mentoring and Motivating | Check out our newly designed website for specific opportunities. Are you looking to mentor an up-and-coming professional or maybe you're looking for a mentor to assist you in your professional ventures? We've created five virtual groups that we're filling with our members.

**Tuesday's** are for Telling Your Story | We've be creatively telling our followers your story. How and why you're in business? What your hopes are for the next 18 months? And, inside views of NEW businesses where we'll create a "just like being there" atmosphere, and so much MORE!

**Wednesdays** are for What's Up Wednesdays | Typically, we pop in on our members and ask questions of them as well as reward them with delicious popcorn from NCG Cinema. Well, things have changed and now we'll be virtually popping into our businesses to check in via Zoom. Take the opportunity to connect with our Ambassadors, Staff and Board of Directors. We'll also be meeting with our Silent Observer and Military Affairs committees on Wednesday too.

**Thursdays** are for Take Away Thursdays | Be looking for upcoming webinars, Take-Out Blitz's, and so much MORE!

**Fridays** are for Field Trip Fridays | Field Trip Friday's include Chamber staff visiting member businesses when applicable (while practicing social distancing and all recommended safety guidelines) and sharing their experiences with you. Field Trip Friday's also includes field trips for Women in Business Power Hours along with Java & Beer Coffee Hours.

As always, the Chamber will be incorporating other event and engagement opportunities which is why it's important to do three things to stay connected and in-the-know with us:

1. Stay informed of upcoming opportunities by frequently visiting our Upcoming Events page on [battlecreek.org](http://battlecreek.org)
2. Sign-up to receive our Tuesday's Tidbits eNewsletter by visiting [battlecreek.org](http://battlecreek.org) (bottom of homepage)
3. Liking and following our Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube pages

And once again, thank you for pivoting with us as we navigate through 2021 and the needs of you, our members! You're feedback and willingness to allow us to be your Chamber is greatly appreciated.



## THE CHAMBER IS A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR BUSINESS

*The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce is a five-star accredited chamber of commerce. What does this mean?*

Accreditation with the United States Chamber of Commerce is the only program of its kind that defines excellence in chamber planning and recognizes chambers for outstanding contributions toward positive change in their communities. The purpose of the U.S. Chamber's Accreditation Program is to facilitate continuing excellence in the chamber industry and to foster a pro-business environment across America.

There are over 890 chambers that have participated in the program since 1964. Currently, 202 chambers carry this distinction. With approximately 7,000 chambers in the United States, Accreditation with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a prestigious honor that distinguishes the high quality, expertise, and strong leadership displayed by Accredited state and local chambers of commerce.

By earning Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a chamber shows its dedication to:

- Reviewing, improving, and promoting strong business practices
- Recognizing leadership and outstanding contributions to the community
- Supporting the principles of free enterprise and promoting pro-growth policies at federal, state, and local levels
- Establishing best practices and staying in-step with industry changes

We aspire to be the number one resource for best practices, innovative resources, and information for the business community in the greater Battle Creek region and Calhoun County.

Here are the strategies in which the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce strive to be a **Center for Excellence** for local businesses:

- Ensure all programs, resources, services, communications, samples, awards, and meetings have a best practice and forward – leaning focus.
- Continue to expand staff expertise in all aspects of chamber management, major policy issues and other forces impacting economics, business and society. Ensure we provide high value to members facing complex challenges.
- Right size number of programs, resources and services focused on the social, economic, business, and political trends that impact our members and communities we serve.
- Streamline resources and materials to focus on modern, best-in class materials, and make the process for finding and retrieving items simpler and faster.
- Increase services focused on the needs of growing businesses (i.e. business planning, leadership, organizational management, measuring and communicating value, trends, etc.) including customized consulting.
- Improve existing and seek new benefits to improve chamber organizational performance and aid in member recruitment and retention.
- Increase original thought leadership around trends and best practices. Includes research, speeches, writing, surveys, quick polls and benchmarking.

The collective insight of our organization's leadership is designed to produce lasting impact on the individuals, businesses and organizations we serve. The impact statement is a guiding principle in our work.

The Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce connects and empowers business and community professionals to have the courage and confidence to be catalytic leaders in addressing their business and communities' greatest issues.



## HOLIDAY CHAMBER GIFT CERTIFICATES

*Our Town Match Program brought to You by Consumers Energy*

Our Town, brought to you by Consumers Energy, was launched on Monday, December 14, 2020 with the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce. To assist in this challenging time, Consumers Energy sought to help Michigan local small businesses and their employees with a holiday cash infusion while also allowing community members to stretch their dollars. They provided a dollar-for-dollar match for gift cards/certificates purchased through local chambers of commerce and downtown organizations.

The 'Our Town' gift card promotion doubled the amount shoppers could spend in downtowns across 56 communities. For example, bought \$50 and got \$100 to spend. "Small businesses are the backbone of the communities we serve, and every community has seen those businesses feel the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Consumers Energy's Vice President of Customer Experience Lauren Youngdahl Snyder. "With 'Our Town,' we want to end the year by spreading cheer. We're putting dollars directly into shoppers' hands to help them stretch their budgets and give a boost to shops and restaurants in their hometowns."

Consumers Energy provided \$3,000 to \$40,000 to local organizations (a total of \$500,000) in the Lower Peninsula where they provide electric and natural gas service. Shoppers earned the matching dollars when they bought gift cards directly from their local chambers and downtown organizations. For the Greater Battle Creek Area, gift cards were available for purchase, and are currently sold out, at the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce office on Monday, December 14, 2020. \$15,000 of gift cards were purchased the week of the 14th putting \$30,000 into our local community to be used within the first quarter



BROUGHT TO YOU BY



*\$50,000 Invested  
into Our Local Economy*



of 2021. *The Chamber launched 'Our Town' on its Facebook page reaching 18,665 people, engaged 1,527 followers, and was shared 112 times.* Due to the popularity of the program and the many positive comments it received, Consumers Energy funded a second round of the program putting an additional \$20,000 for a total of \$50,000 in our local economy. The second round kicked off on Thursday, December 17, 2020 and also sold out quickly.

"We thank Consumers Energy for taking a meaningful step to help small businesses that have felt the impact of the pandemic," said Michigan Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Rich Studley. "'Our Town' focuses on our Michigan hometowns and puts dollars in the hands of businesses that keep Michiganders at work this holiday season."

If you purchased 'Our Town' gift certificates from the Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce for yourself or a loved one this holiday season, a list of all participating Chamber members accepting these gift cards can be found on the Chamber's website, [battlecreek.org](http://battlecreek.org).

Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce  
269.962.4076  
battlecreek.org



# NEVER OVERPAY FOR PRESCRIPTIONS AGAIN NOW THAT'S CLEVER.



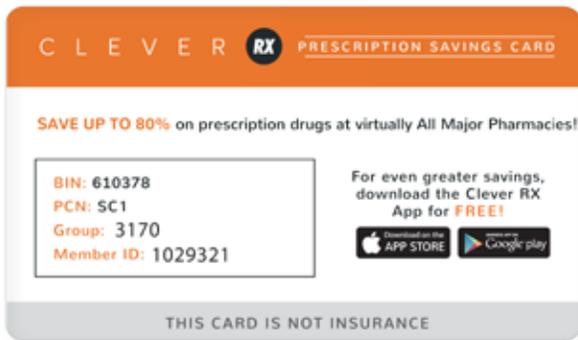
Download your Clever RX App or use your Clever RX card to unlock exclusive savings.



Present your Clever RX App or Clever RX card to your pharmacist.



FREE to use. Save up to 80% off prescription drugs and beat copay prices.



**START SAVING TODAY WITH CLEVER RX**

- ✓ 100% FREE to use
- ✓ Save up to 80% off prescription drugs – often beats the average copay
- ✓ Unlock discounts on thousands of medications
- ✓ Accepted at most pharmacies nationwide



**STEP 1:**

Download the FREE Clever RX App. From your App Store search "Clever RX" and hit download. Be sure to enter in Group ID 3170 and Member ID 1029321 to complete the process. This will unlock exclusive savings for you and your family!



**STEP 2:**

Find where you can save on your medication. Using your zip code, when you search for your medication Clever RX checks which pharmacies near you offer the lowest price. Savings can be up to 80% compared to what you're currently paying.



**STEP 3:**

Click the voucher with the lowest price, closest to you, and/or at your preferred pharmacy. Show the voucher on your screen to the pharmacist when you pick up your medication. Click "share" to text yourself the voucher for easy access when you are ready to use it.



**STEP 4:**

Share the Clever RX App. Click "Share" on the bottom of the Clever RX App to send to your friends, family, and anyone else you want to help receive instant discounts on their prescription medications. Over 70% of people can benefit from a prescription savings card.

NOW THAT IS NOT ONLY CLEVER, IT IS CLEVER RX.

DID YOU KNOW?

**70%**

Over 70% of people can benefit from a prescription savings card due to high deductible health plans, high copays, and being underinsured or uninsured.

**30%**

Over 30% of prescriptions never get filled due to high costs.

**40%**

40% of the top ten most prescribed drugs have increased by over 100% in price.

**70%**

Clever RX prices are lower than competitor prices 70% of the time.