



Economic Development Council
of Livingston County

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORTS 2019

Q4

43 COMPANIES
VISITED

119 REFERRALS
PROVIDED

ASAHI KASEI INVESTS

\$10.5 M

TO EXPAND IN FOWLerville

3 NEW PROJECTS
ADDED TO PIPELINE

31 HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS JOINED
LIVCO JOB SHADOW DAY



Ann Arbor SPARK will advance the economy of the Ann Arbor region by establishing it as a desired place for innovation, business location and growth, and for talented people to live and work. The Ann Arbor region will be recognized for its academic, business, and community resources, and its collaborative culture. For more information visit: www.annarborusa.org

Regional News



The Economic Development Council of Livingston County maintains a close relationship with private sector industry and local government to provide referrals and services that promote economic growth. This section of the quarterly report provides updates on ongoing projects and developments in the community that contribute to local prosperity.

Attracting and Retaining Top Talent in Livingston County

Ann Arbor SPARK conducted a wage and benefit survey in the fall of 2019 for the manufacturing industry in Livingston County. One of the most frequent data requests from employers continues to be the need for wage data.

Currently, SPARK relies on a paid database to obtain wage data in response to local requests. Feedback from employers and stakeholders was clear that it would be beneficial to have updated local wage data specific to Livingston County employers. A bi-annual wage report has historically been compiled by the Howell Chamber of Commerce. SPARK collaborated with the chamber to produce an updated report for 2019 that would provide wage and benefits data. SPARK used funds secured through a state grant to launch the survey.

The project was led by EctoHR with guidance from Grace and Porta Benefits. A public presentation of the full report will be scheduled to highlight major findings and trends from the survey. Initial results show that the average maximum wage across seven positions surveyed is \$23.60 per hour, bonuses and profit-sharing were found to be common sources of additional earnings, and half of the employers offer tuition reimbursement or referral bonuses as a fringe benefit to employees.

POSITION	LOWEST HOURLY RATE	AVG. MINIMUM HOURLY RATE	AVG. MIDPOINT HOURLY RATE	AVG. MAXIMUM HOURLY RATE	HIGHEST HOURLY RATE
CNC Operator	\$13.00	\$16.11	\$18.52	\$22.24	\$30.00
General Laborer	\$11.00	\$13.72	\$16.17	\$18.98	\$25.00
Maintenance Technician	\$13.00	\$18.39	\$21.35	\$27.20	\$36.00
PLC Operator	\$13.00	\$16.94	\$20.77	\$26.84	\$35.00
Tool & Die Operator	\$13.00	\$18.77	\$22.60	\$27.58	\$36.95
Welder/Fabricator	\$13.00	\$16.56	\$19.62	\$23.48	\$35.00

SEMCOG Regional Update



On December 4 at the Genoa Township hall, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) presented a regional economic update, with more than 40 attendees from various organizations in Livingston County present. Key learnings included that Livingston County ranks tenth by population size in Michigan and Livingston is fifth largest county in the region with approximately four percent of the SEMCOG population.

The major strategies for the region are:

- Right infrastructure in place
- Impacts of technology
- Marketing the region
- Workforce shortages and labor force participation

The EDCLC and SPARK continue to align with SEMCOG by strategically prioritizing talent development, business attraction, business retention, and supporting municipal priorities such as placemaking.

Regional News

The Bear Factory Arrives in Green Oak

The Bear Factory, a build-your-own and custom stuffed animal business, has relocated its company headquarters and North American distribution center to Green Oak Township near Whitmore Lake from its previous location in Wixom.



Established in 2001, the family-owned company moved into a new 27,000-square-foot building at 10609 Hi Tech Drive, giving them more space to move the nearly four million stuffed animals that come through their distribution center on average a year. The company is similar to Build-a-Bear but does not operate retail stores. The company has six full-time employees, using temporary employees during seasonal peaks.

SPARK is working to provide resources for the company to grow their international trade opportunities to help grow a more sustainable supply chain of materials. The Bear Factory continues to find ways to improve and implement green practices in their business operations. Examples of their recent initiatives include recycling programs, waste management protocols, and implementing energy efficient equipment and practices into their daily routines.

International trade program referrals through SPARK will help the company continue to find new filling materials sourced from recycled and other sustainable fibers, helping to achieve part of The Bear Factory's goal to become more eco-friendly. Other SPARK referrals have been with the Livingston Michigan Works! office, ensuring the company has access to available training and other workforce resources in Livingston County.

Livingston County Job Shadow Day

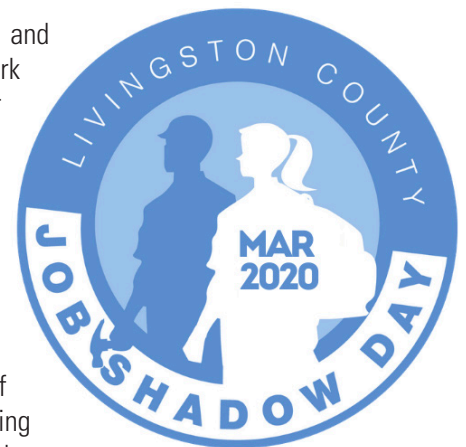
In December, Livingston County celebrated Job Shadow Day with more than 20 high school students and 10 local businesses partnering for a full day of experiential learning.

The businesses and civic organizations hosted students for the day and professionals shared with them what a typical day at work entails. The Job Shadow program provides students with a chance to explore different careers, speak with professionals in the field, and experience local business culture. This event also helps students connect what they learn in the classroom and their own interests to real life career opportunities.

Employers use this opportunity to promote their organizations and industries to future graduates.

Participating employers in the 2019 December Job Shadow Day were: Workskills Corporation, Armor Protective Packaging, Ann Arbor SPARK, Mister Sparky, Howell Chamber, Livingston County Visitors Bureau, Michigan Works!, and Tribar Manufacturing. Educators from the Howell, Brighton, Hartland, and Fowlerville districts participated. This provided students varied experiences to explore careers from business leadership roles, operations, skilled trades, and economic development.

The Livingston Career and College Access Network is anticipating another great [Job Shadow Day this March](#). Before students can sign up for a job shadow, we need employers! If you are interested in meeting the next wave of employees and showing them your company and your field, sign up by February 7.



Building Great Organizations



Building Great Organizations is a new bi-monthly series from Ann Arbor SPARK that highlights best practices and tools to promote highly innovative, productive, and positive workplace culture.

By Anne Partington

Leveraging Generational Diversity in the Workplace

Did you know that five generations are actively working today? What does that mean in the workplace and what are some ways to optimize and leverage the talents of employees across generations?



Being aware of these generations, preferred styles of communication, and leveraging skills can prove to be a great asset in building effective organizations. Dr. Banks-Hall highlighted some key benefits of having generational diversity including greater skill sets for problem solving, understanding different audience perspectives, learning opportunities to teach one another such as with tech applications, and mentoring as a tool to share experiences and aid in succession planning.

Looking ahead to the future, this **Workforce in 2025** chart illustrates the strong presence from five generations in the workplace making planning strategies being even more important to drive effective communication and an inclusive work environment.

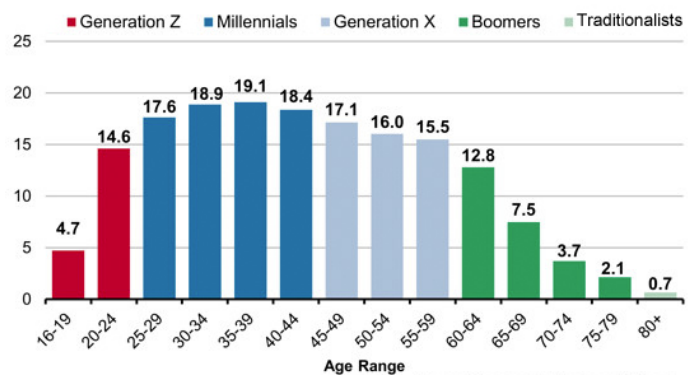
Generational diversity refers to having employees of various generations represented in the workplace.

The We ARE Livingston event series (sponsored by the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce) welcomed speaker Dr. Regina Banks-Hall, interim dean of Cleary University, to present **Generational Characteristics: Bridging the Gap in the 21st Century**.

Professor Banks-Hall guided the audience through a topic that is relevant to any employer in any industry as many organizations today have five generations of employees working together.

The Workforce in 2025

Projected size of U.S. labor force (in millions) by age, for the year 2025



Some strategies Dr. Banks-Hall shared to aid in successfully leveraging generational diversity are:

1. **Eliminate stereotypes tied to any generation**
 - Avoid making assumptions
 - Get to know your employees as individuals
 - Value each employee for their unique skill set and what they bring to the table
2. **Change your communication style to adapt**
 - Be open to using various communication channels
 - Be aware that employees may have different preferred modes of communication
 - Use different modes of communication including face to face conversations, web meetings, blogs, video conferencing, etc.
3. **Utilize generationally diverse teams to leverage learnings/skills**
 - Encourage diverse teams to drive collaboration and build relationships
 - Use experiences to drive strategies and innovation

Resources

Recommended resources for more information about generational diversity:

Defining Generations: Where Millennials end and Generation Z Begins

by Michael Dimock, President of
Pew Research Center

Harnessing the Power of a
Multigenerational Workforce © 2017
SHRM Foundation

Created for the SHRM Foundation by BullsEye
Resources, www.bullseyeresources.com.

TRADITIONALISTS BORN: 1925 – 1945

DEPENDABLE | STRAIGHTFORWARD | TACTFUL | LOYAL

Shaped by: The Great Depression, World War II, radio and movies

Motivated by: Respect, recognition, providing long-term value to the company

Communication style: Personal touch, handwritten notes instead of email

Worldview: Obedience over individualism; age equals seniority; advancing through the hierarchy

Employers should:

Provide satisfying work and opportunities to contribute; emphasize stability



Baby Boomers who plan to work past age 65*



BABY BOOMERS BORN: 1946 – 1964

OPTIMISTIC | COMPETITIVE | WORKAHOLIC | TEAM-ORIENTED

Shaped by: Vietnam War, Civil Rights Movement, Watergate

Motivated by: Company loyalty, teamwork, duty

Communication style: Whatever is most efficient, including phone calls and face to face

Worldview: Achievement comes after paying one's dues; sacrifice for success

Employers should:

Provide them with specific goals and deadlines; put them in mentor roles; offer coaching-style feedback

GENERATION X BORN: 1965 – 1980

FLEXIBLE | INFORMAL | SKEPTICAL | INDEPENDENT

Shaped by: The AIDS epidemic, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dot-com boom

Motivated by: Diversity, work-life balance, their personal-professional interests rather than the company's interests

Communication style: Whatever is most efficient, including phone calls and face to face

Worldview: Favoring diversity; quick to move on if their employer fails to meet their needs; resistant to change at work if it affects their personal lives

Employers should:

Give them immediate feedback; provide flexible work arrangements and work-life balance; extend opportunities for personal development



Startup founders who are Gen Xers—the highest percentage*

BY 2028
Gen Xers will outnumber Baby Boomers*



Percentage of global workforce to be made up of Millennials by 2025*



Millennials ages 25-35 living at home with their parents*

MILLENNIALS BORN: 1981 – 2000

COMPETITIVE | CIVIC- AND OPEN-MINDED | ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED

Shaped by: Columbine, 9/11, the internet

Motivated by: Responsibility, the quality of their manager, unique work experiences

Communication style: IMs, texts, and email

Worldview: Seeking challenge, growth, and development; a fun work life and work-life balance; likely to leave an organization if they don't like change

Employers should:

Get to know them personally; manage by results; be flexible on their schedule and work assignments; provide immediate feedback

GENERATION Z BORN: 2001 – 2020

GLOBAL | ENTREPRENEURIAL | PROGRESSIVE | LESS FOCUSED

Shaped by: Life after 9/11, the Great Recession, access to technology from a young age

Motivated by: Diversity, personalization, individuality, creativity

Communication style: IMs, texts, social media

Worldview: Self-identify as digital device addicts; value independence and individuality; prefer to work with Millennial managers, innovative coworkers, and new technologies

Employers should:

Offer opportunities to work on multiple projects at the same time; provide work-life balance; allow them to be self-directed and independent



Gen Zers who want to interact with their boss daily or several times each day*



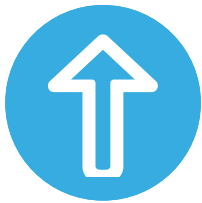
Gen Zers who expect their employer to provide formal training**



Local Dashboard



The local dashboard tracks demographic trends that are important measures of economic growth and prosperity. The data is compiled from a range of sources, including the Bureau for Labor Statistics, the Census, the Livingston County Association of Realtors, and more. The trend arrow reflects the change in quarterly data, using the most recent data available. Timing of updates vary by source.



Unemployment

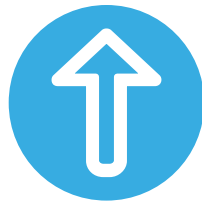
Q3 2019

Michigan: 4.2

Livingston: 3.4

The unemployment rate in Livingston County increased slightly from 3.3 in Q2 to 3.4 at the end of Q3. The local unemployment rate remains lower than the state unemployment rate.

Source: BLS LAUS



Wages

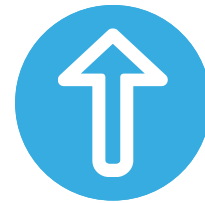
Q2 2019

Michigan: \$1,009

Livingston: \$861

The average weekly wage in Livingston County saw a slight increase from \$858 in Q1 2019 to \$861 in Q2 2019. The average weekly wage in Livingston County remains lower than the average weekly wage statewide.

Source: BLS QCEW



Labor Force

Q3 2019

Michigan: 4,984,644

Livingston: 103,565

The labor force in Livingston County increased by about 226 people between end of Q2 2019 and Q3 2019. During the same time period, the labor force in Michigan increased by 22,410 people. The labor force consists of individuals working or seeking employment.

Source: BLS LAUS



MFG Employment

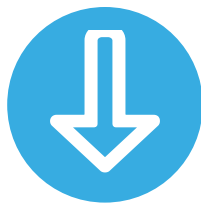
Q1 2019

Michigan: 628,978

Livingston: 9,840

Employment in manufacturing remains flat in Livingston County. Employment in manufacturing increased by 3% statewide between Q4 2018 and Q1 2019.

Source: BLS QCEW



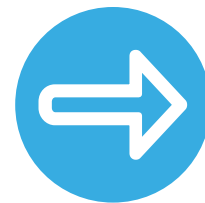
Job Postings

Q3 2019

Livingston: 7,079

The total number of job postings in Livingston County decreased by 25% between Q4 and Q4 2019.

Source: Workforce Intelligence Network



Home Sales

Q2 2019

Livingston: 964

The number of home sales in Livingston County statistically remained the same in Q2 2019 compared to Q2 2018.

Source: LCAR

SPARK Metrics



January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019

PROJECT PIPELINE

The project pipeline metrics track projects that SPARK staff are currently working to complete. If and when these projects are complete, they will contribute additional jobs and capital investment into the local economy.



SUCCESS METRICS

Metrics of success are recorded when SPARK provides assistance to projects that successfully create jobs and/or investment in the community.



CALL PROGRAM

The Call Program is SPARK's outreach program to local employers. Company visits are made to build relationships, identify projects, and connect employers to community resources.



2019 Call Program



COMPANY NAME	LOCATION	COMPANY NAME	LOCATION
Q1 Hug-A-Plug	Brighton Township	Q3 ChemTrend	City of Howell
Q1 ASTI Environmental	Brighton Township	Q3 CAE Incorporated	Hamburg Township
Q1 Empower HR	Brighton Township	Q3 SLS RFID	Howell Township
Q1 Thai Summit America	City of Howell	Q3 JNB Machining	Village of Fowlerville
Q1 BD Electrical	Howell Township	Q3 Vconverter	Green Oak Township
Q1 AA Gear & Manufacturing	Howell Township	Q3 Dunnage Engineering	City of Brighton
Q1 Boss Engineering	Genoa Township	Q3 Fortech Products	Green Oak Township
Q1 Mt. Brighton	Genoa Township	Q3 Flexible Metal	Hamburg Township
Q1 Export Corporation	Green Oak Township	Q4 Armor Protective Packaging, Inc.	Howell Township
Q1 Carl Zeiss Industrial Metrology, LLC	Green Oak Township	Q4 KW Corporation	Village of Fowlerville
Q1 C & B Machinery	Green Oak Township	Q4 Refrigeration Research	City of Brighton
Q1 Legacy Center	Green Oak Township	Q4 Rex Materials	Howell Township
Q1 Total Security Solutions	Village of Fowlerville	Q4 Meritor	Howell Township
Q1 Asahi Kasei Plastics North America	Village of Fowlerville	Q4 ARC Engineering Solutions	City of Howell
Q2 Brighton NC Machine Corporation	Green Oak Township	Q4 Lowry Solutions	Green Oak Township
Q2 Transtar Autobody Technologies	Genoa Township	Q4 Mobileteer LLC	Brighton Township
Q2 Highland Engineering	Genoa Township	Q4 Ignite XDS	Green Oak Township
Q2 bryllan, LLC	Brighton Township	Q4 Corrigan Oil Company	City of Brighton
Q2 IEC Fabrication, LLC	Village of Fowlerville	Q4 Commercial Construction Inc.	Green Oak Township
Q2 FlexDex, Inc.	Brighton Township		
Q2 Eberspaecher North America, Inc.	City of Brighton		
Q2 TG Fluid Systems, Inc.	City of Brighton		
Q2 FT Techno North America	Handy Township		

Quarterly Highlights



2019 Livingston Annual Meeting



On November 7, the Economic Development Council of Livingston County (EDCLC) and Ann Arbor SPARK held the 2019 annual meeting. The community was presented with the project successes through community and private sector partners. Since 2012, the EDCLC and Ann Arbor SPARK have generated \$298 million in new investment in Livingston County and the creation of more than 5,700 jobs. In 2018-2019, the collaboration resulted in \$18.8 million in investment and 80 new jobs.

Projects Ann Arbor SPARK and EDCLC executed in 2019 included Manufacturing Day, which connected 13 companies with local high schoolers to offer them insight on career opportunities. The meeting also featured success stories on Hatch Stamping, Asahi Kasei Plastics, and Pop Daddy.

“The EDCLC and Ann Arbor SPARK partnership continues to be the driving catalyst for Livingston County’s business success and economic growth,” said James Wickman, Hartland Township Manager and our EDCLC board chair. “It is exciting that this collaborative effort continues to yield positive results for Livingston County.”



Asahi Kasei Expansion in Fowlerville

Asahi Kasei Plastics North America recently purchased the CZ Cartage facility, to expand their campus and operations in the Village of Fowlerville. Needing **AsahiKASEI** to relieve space constraints within their warehousing operations, Asahi Kasei prepared plans to utilize the building for their own warehousing and logistics operations, thus freeing space at their current building. Asahi plans to invest \$10.5 million in connecting the two parcels into a single campus.

Events



Community events are a great way to make connections between local leaders, and industry to create a vibrant network of individuals committed to economic prosperity.

Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Meetings

LivCo Road Rally

Navigating Future Careers

The Liv Co Road Rally is a community event featuring a county-wide scavenger hunt where participants chase clues written by Brighton's Puzzled Escape along a course of "pit stops" and ultimately ends at the "finish line" at Mt. Brighton. The event works to highlight local employers that have in-demand career opportunities right here in Livingston County. The event also raises money to fund scholarships for 2020 Livingston County high school graduates pursuing careers featured on Michigan's HOT 50 Jobs list. This is the third year the event has taken place; last year 12 Livingston County students received scholarship money.

Ann Arbor SPARK is proud to help plan and sponsor this event to help connect local employers with students and the greater community. For more information on this year's event or to access the scholarship application go to lccan.org/road-rally. For more information on Michigan's HOT 50 jobs, please visit milmi.org/research/category/michigans-hot-50-jobs.

Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Meetings

Join a local Chamber of Commerce at their Annual Meeting! January and February will be exciting months, as the Howell, Brighton, and Hartland Chambers will host annual celebrations of their respective business communities and members.



Howell Chamber of Commerce
Annual Dinner and
Citizen of the Year Presentation
January 23, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
[Register](#)



Hartland Chamber of Commerce
2020 Annual Awards Dinner
Puttin' On the Ritz
January 30, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
[Register](#)



Greater Brighton Chamber of Commerce
Annual Membership Meeting
and After Hours
February 6, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
[Register](#)

Report Definitions



COMPANY VISITS:

Company visits are meetings with local businesses regarding their current business outlook. This is a core “economic gardening” strategy that provides opportunities for referrals like workforce development training, state-level resources, tax incentives, business development opportunities, cost reduction strategies, access to capital, etc.

EMPLOYMENT MULTIPLIER:

Employment multiplier is a figure calculated by economic modeling through Regional Economic Models, Inc., which quantifies the indirect assistance provided through new job creation. For example, an employment multiplier of 2.0 would indicate that one new job would affect two total jobs (the new job itself, and another indirect job). Employment multipliers are based on the company’s industry and investment, among other factors.

PROJECT PIPELINE:

The project pipeline represents potential projects that have been identified, along with their current status and probability of completion.

REFERRALS:

Referrals to outside resources or value-added services provided by staff. This could include a referral regarding a state-level program, a review to determine the feasibility of entry into a new sector, or technical assistance with local or state-level programs.



