



THIS IS KINEXUS

One person. One Business. One Community at a time.



 kinexus group

A Letter from Our CEO

Welcome to Kinexus Group.

We are committed to inspiring positive economic change one person, one business, one community at a time. This means that we are working around the clock to fill the talent gap through training and education, finding solutions to employer challenges, and stimulating economic growth for communities across Michigan.

We have played a pivotal role in southwest Michigan for over five decades. Now, more than ever, we stand at the forefront of the battle that employers across the state are facing. With an aging, less educated workforce and many folks leaving our region and state- we exist to reverse those trends.

We know we cannot do this alone. Kinexus Group has a number of partners, including businesses, communities, and individuals who have the drive, determination, and desire for change. We look beyond the walls of our organization and see who should be at the table fighting the battle with us. We ask the tough questions so we can solve tough challenges together and are willing to put in the work to see that change happen.

On the following pages you will see examples of our work. It ranges from alternative education to award-winning dropout prevention programs that help students shed barriers to graduation; to working with companies to retain and attract their number one resource – their people. We work with hundreds of employers and thousands of individuals each year to create impact for the people who utilize our broad array of services for personal and business growth. We measure what we do – that's how we know we are getting the job done.

Who is Kinexus Group? We are the team that helps your family members get their education, your neighbor's business grow, and we're the ones who are pushing every community in Michigan to be better. We exist to win the war for talent, build a more competitive place, and knock down barriers that stand in the way. We look forward to working and winning with you.

Todd Gustafson

President and Chief Executive Officer
Kinexus Group





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Our Purpose

Our family of organizations share one purpose: We are committed to inspiring positive economic change, one person, one business, and one community at a time. You'll notice that all of the Kinexus Group subsidiary organizations are governed by their own Board of Directors, they are funded differently, and have their own geographical footprints.



Our Family of Organizations

 kinexus group



We believe in hiring talented, hard working, change agents. We have a culture that puts an emphasis on leadership and teamwork to get the job done. Kinexus Group has been recognized nationally by the Nonprofit Times as one of the nation's Best Nonprofits to Work For. We were also named one of Crain's Cool Places to Work in 2016 and one of MiBiz Magazine's Best-Managed Nonprofits in 2015.

Economic Impact

- Statewide -

The median age has surpassed 40 years.*

39.8 years in 2020 → **40.2** years in 2021

Just **31.7%** of adults ages 25 and over have a bachelor's degree or higher credential.

The national average is 35.0%.*

The labor force has yet to recover from the pandemic.**

Through July 2023, there are still **19,000** fewer Michiganders in the workforce

The unemployment rate is at a 23-year low.**

The **3.6%** unemployment rate in June and July is the lowest since May 2000

Michigan employers added **63,100** jobs over the last year. ***

108,000 Michiganders have joined the workforce since December 2022 alone.

* U.S. Census Bureau 1-Year and 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates

** Michigan Dept. of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB), accessed August 17, 2023

*** As of July 2023

Economic Impact

- Berrien, Cass, Van Buren -

The weighted median average age is 42.8 years.*

This is older than both the state **40.2** years and the U.S. as a whole **38.8** years

28% of adults ages 25 and over have a bachelor's degree or higher credential.

This is lower than both the statewide average (31.7%) and U.S. as a whole (35.0%).*

The labor force has yet to recover from the pandemic.**

There were an estimated **2,900** fewer local residents in the workforce in June than in January 2020.^

The unemployment rate remains higher than prior to the pandemic.**

4.2% in January 2020 → **4.7%** in June 2023 ^

BCVB employers have added nearly 7,400 jobs since 2020 (2023 Estimate).***

As of June, nearly **3,500** residents have joined the workforce over the last year.^

The regional population increased in 2022, growing by an estimated 144 individuals.*** The regional economy grew by 2.1% in 2021.****

* U.S. Census Bureau 1-Year and 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates

** Michigan Dept. of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB), accessed August 17, 2023

*** Lightcast Data Set 2023.3, accessed August 17, 2023

****Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

^ Based on 12-month moving averages



Business Solutions • MiWorks.org

The Michigan Works! Business Solutions team assists employers by understanding their needs and creating solutions. Whether it is workforce related, infrastructure or expansion needs, our team develops solutions through grant funding and strategic partnerships. We work closely with employers, educational providers, as well as the non-profit and government sectors to ensure continued success for employers in southwest Michigan.

The Business Solutions Team includes the following services:

- Going PRO is a competitive funding source that provides a solution to skill shortages throughout the State of Michigan. Our team helps local employers navigate the process of applying for these funds and helps develop a plan based on needed skills in the industry.
- We host multiple employer-based consortiums in core sectors to identify, strategize, and solve complex problems. With a demand driven model, our employers help build and inform a curriculum that addresses talent needs and allows individuals from many walks of life to pursue in demand credentialing.
- Our business solutions team collaborates with area partners to host career exploration events, bringing anywhere from 10 to over 2,000 area students together to provide hands-on exploration, facility tours, and internships. These events create a talent pipeline for area businesses.
- We help create and manage apprenticeship programs for companies looking to develop a long term workforce. In alignment with the US Department of Labor, our apprenticeship programs provide a structured competency-based training program that delivers an Industry Recognized Credential.
- Our team provides continuous support and barrier removal services to employed individuals through our Business Resource Network, the LINK. Our local program has helped 173 employees and their families solve barriers like transportation, childcare, and financial challenges, all of which prevent them from fully engaged at work!

Going PRO Talent Fund

1,382 Employees
4 Sectors
\$2.5M Awarded



**EAST JORDAN
PLASTICS, INC.**
The Sustainable Choice™

“ This was the first time the company has done any type of formal training through the GoingPro Talent Fund. Our employees really appreciated the training and acknowledged the investment we are making in them. It has helped individuals on our team understand that their job and role in the company is important and valued. Some employees who did not go through the training noticed how engaged those who did are and have asked when they are going through training.”

- Jennie Wideman HR Manager East Jordan Plastics, South Haven



Talent Solutions • MiWorks.org

The Michigan Works! Talent team connects individuals of all ages to education, training, and employment. In addition, we offer a variety of free services to assist job seekers at almost any level, including career coaching, professional workshops, access to technology, and connections to a career.

Below are some specific services we offer to individuals in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties:

- Our team provides education services to assist individuals with obtaining their GED or High School Diploma. We have youth and adult education programs in our Michigan Works! Service Center that offers onsite and virtual services.
- We can help those looking to transition to a new career field or get additional training in their current industry through 1:1 career coaching and mentoring.
- Depending on eligibility, we offer scholarships for classroom training in high-demand occupations and on-the-job training opportunities.
- We have a team dedicated to helping in-school and out-of-school youth through coaching, mentorship, and career exploration.
- We assist individuals with support services such as housing, transportation, childcare, food, and more. If we cannot find a solution to an individual's needs, we refer them to one of our community partners in their area of need.



Over the last year we have
connected with over:

33,000 customers

Virtually or in person to support with various services, including:

- **Unemployment assistance**
- **Career services**
- **Apprenticeship enrollment**
- **Employment**
- **Training**
- **School**
- **Workshops**
- **Resume building assistance**

Michael Christensen overcame many significant challenges on his pathway to success of becoming a master brewer, but has always stayed the course. One of those challenges is that Michael was born deaf, which resulted in him falling behind in school. Due to the demands of balancing work, going to college, and raising a young family, Michael realized that he needed assistance when it came to pursuing his education for things not covered by traditional financial aid. The Michigan Works! team supported him with mileage reimbursement to and from classes and with financial assistance for childcare to help support his young family. He just graduated from a Sustainable Brewing Program and was recently awarded first place in a national competition for one of the brewery's Pure Michigan beers.



Offender Services • MiWorks.org

The Michigan Works! Offender Services Team brings a variety of support services to individuals returning to their communities in Berrien, Cass, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Calhoun, and Branch counties. Our team runs the Offender Success program for all of region eight and the Second Chance program in Berrien County, both of which support individuals in their transition back into society.

Offender Success is a statewide program operated in partnership with the Michigan Department of Corrections that assists recently paroled offenders transitioning back into society. In this program, we focus on four different types of services for individuals that are reintegrating such as job placement, residential security, health and behavioral health, and social support

Second Chance is a local program operated in partnership with the Berrien County Jail that assists offenders transitioning back into the community. In this program, we begin with immediate engagement while individuals are incarcerated in the Berrien County Jail and continue mentoring and monitoring them after release. We help with job readiness, job placement and retention, education, training, emergency housing, health and behavioral health coordinated services with Berrien County Drug and Mental Health Court, and other support services.



**Since April 2017, our
Offender Success
program has placed over**

600 individuals **250** employers
into employment with over

**Since Second Chance launched
in 2020, our team has provided
support services to over**

195 individuals **80** percent
placing into employment in Berrien County

It all started with his first conviction in 2001 for breaking and entering. From there his life spiraled out of control, with multiple arrests, at least 7 convictions and time in prison and jail. Joshua Cobb's last conviction was in 2018. When released, he was ready to turn his life around but he had no identification of transportation, even worse he owed a large amount of back child support. As a result, his driver's license was suspended and he had an outstanding bench warrant.

Our Second Chance team helped him get ID documentation and search for manufacturers near his home. Second Chance discussed Cobb's Situation with the Berrien County Friend of the Court (FOC) and together, they began working with him to recall the bench warrants, release the suspension on his driver's license, and to adjust Joshua's child support to amounts that fit with his current income. Joshua got his driver's license back, has been successful in his new position and has nowhere to go but up.

Adult Education • MiWorks.org

Adult Education assists students 16 and up with earning a GED. Students are provided an individualized learning plan and work at their own pace on-site or remotely. Self-paced learning options allow students to achieve their GED on a timeline that is best for them. Being located in the Michigan Works! Building allows students to get connected to workforce resources. Similar to the other Michigan Works! services, adult education is free of charge. We pay for GED training, GED practice tests and GED tests. In addition, our team can assist students with technology and transportation while they are enrolled with us. As of Fall 2022, we launched in-person learning sites at KPEP in Benton Harbor and at the Public Library in Galien. We are looking forward to expanding in person learning options in the upcoming program year.

In the 2022-2023 program year, our Adult Education program enrolled

230
participants

far surpassing our program goal of 175 enrolled participants



Grace Foster Diaz enrolled in adult education on March 23, 2022. At the time of enrollment, Grace just got married, was employed at Ulta, and was looking to obtain her GED. After a month of being enrolled, she passed her first three tests and after studying through our Essential Education program, Grace passed her last test in December 2022. She finished her GED a month before welcoming her first baby in January.

“When I was in my sophomore year of high school I stopped going to school because I felt that hanging out with friends and working a part time job was better for me. After six years of working hard and getting nowhere, I realized I needed to get my GED to work a job I love and not just make money. I knew I couldn't do much with my life unless I had earned my GED. I was tired of feeling like I'm not getting anywhere. Now that I have it, I feel like I can go wherever I want in life! Once I believed in myself and pushed myself to go, it's like a weight was lifted off my shoulders! It's a huge step to achieve my dreams and goals. I was afraid for nothing! It was easier than I thought it would be and the moment I knew I passed my tests the feeling was so gratifying! I never gave up. I always kept pushing myself!” - Grace Foster Diaz



It's in our name. We exist to bridge the gap between education and employment for Southwest Michigan youth.

The Bridge Academy of Southwest Michigan may be a brand new Public School Academy, but its origins span more than a decade of experience in Southwest Michigan to provide students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in and out of the classroom.

Originally founded by Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren in 2010 as a partner program through various local school districts, the previous version of Bridge Academy has served hundreds of students in the tri-county area.

Now as an authorized public school academy, Bridge Academy of Southwest Michigan is a 9-12 high school offering a no nonsense approach to graduation attainment, wrap-around support services and meaningful career exploration opportunities to the tri-county area. The academy is still located inside the Michigan Works! Berrien, Cass, Van Buren facility in Benton Harbor, allowing youth to access a variety of additional resources and support.

We support our Bridge Academy youth with more than just education. We help them overcome challenges they may face including:

- Childcare
- Transportation
- Financial Security
- Food Assistance
- Health and Behavioral Health
- Tuition Assistance Upon Graduation





BentonHarbor
YouthBuild.org

YouthBuild is a national program funded in part by the Department of Labor and Youthbuild Benton Harbor is one of 260 individual programs nationwide. We serve young adults between the ages of 16-24 that are in need of a GED or high school diploma.

While earning their GED, individuals also receive vocational training, specifically in construction or healthcare. Our participants leave with education and a valuable set of skills they can take with them to the workplace. In addition to education and training, we also offer wraparound services such as access to transportation, food, childcare, and many other services to ensure success for each individual we serve.



Since the beginning, the YouthBuild program, has served over

400

individuals

We have assisted with barrier removal such as:

- **Transportation**
- **Clothing**
- **Shoes**
- **Other support services**

We have also provided softs skill training, mentoring, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training and certification as well as construction and construction safety training.



Aniyah Beene came to YouthBuild in the Summer of 2022 after being expelled from her local high school. She was determined to graduate with her class despite the setback. She started out strong, consistently exceeded expectations, and was a leader in her group. Aniyah found her passion in construction and demonstrates a high aptitude for her work.

Aniyah was recently awarded her high school diploma through Bridge Academy of Southwest Michigan. She also earned a Pre-Apprenticeship Certification in construction and is entering a statewide apprenticeship program in the weeks ahead, which will lead to a high skill, high wage job.



X youth solutions

OurYouthSolutions.org

Youth Solutions, a subsidiary of Kinexus Group, inspires and connects youth to achieve a future beyond imagination. Youth Solutions is closing the gap between education and workforce development by providing Michigan's young people with equitable access to education and employment pathways through two service delivery avenues: Jobs for Michigan's Graduates and Youth Solutions Select.

Since 2008, through our premier program, Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG), over 26,800+ youth and young adults have successfully learned the life skills necessary to succeed in education, employment, and in life. We've developed solutions that not only instill a desire for education in young people but also equip them with the necessary knowledge, tools, and experiences to identify and prepare for a job or career.

Simultaneously, we provide support in overcoming individual barriers and ensuring their path to success. In addition to JMG, we have a new service line, Youth Solutions Select. The Youth Solutions Select service supports schools and districts in the creation of a custom, comprehensive, career development program resulting in a culture that supports students' needs through high school and beyond. By expanding our services and deepening the JMG model, we will increase the impact on youth around the state through an open-entry, open-exit model that expands the continuum down to middle school and up to 24 months post-graduation.

JOBS for MICHIGAN'S
GRADUATES
powered by X youth solutions

Youth Solutions' premier program,
Jobs for Michigan's Graduates has a

90%+ graduation rate
ten years running *and over* **84%** youth have gone on to
postsecondary education,
employment or the military

.....
Youth Solutions Select, our new
service line, has been implemented in
Seven Schools and has impacted

2,190 youth
.....

Collectively, we have served more
youth in **one program year** than ever
before in our history, surpassing

5,000 youth



Madison (Maddie) Collins enrolled in JMG during her senior year of high school. During her time with us, she was selected to attend the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) National Student Leadership Academy (NSLA) in Washington D.C. JMG is the Michigan affiliate of the national organization. Attending the NSLA gave her the opportunity to experience new things and network with other youth from around the country.

Maddie is very active in her community and passionate about helping others. In her spare time, she works with children at the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Southwest Michigan and participates in various community service projects such as volunteering at the soup kitchen and cleaning up the streets of Benton Harbor. She was recently crowned Miss Benton Harbor 2023, an award judged on poise, interviewing skills, community service, and communication, all skills that JMG helped her develop.

Although Maddie has graduated from the JMG program, her commitment to JMG continues through active involvement in the JMG/Youth Solutions Alumni Network and the Youth Advisory Council. By helping to amplify the youth voice in everything we do as an organization, Maddie plays a vital role in shaping our work and fostering lasting impact. Maddie plans to attend Western Michigan University in the Fall to pursue a Business Major with the intent to become an entrepreneur of her own fashion line.



Market Van Buren, a subsidiary of Kinexus Group, has principal responsibilities for economic and community development throughout Cass and Van Buren Counties. We connect people, investments, and organizations with strategies and services that improve the quality of life and economic conditions in our region.

SINCE INCEPTION HELPED

CREATE
422
NEW JOBS

+

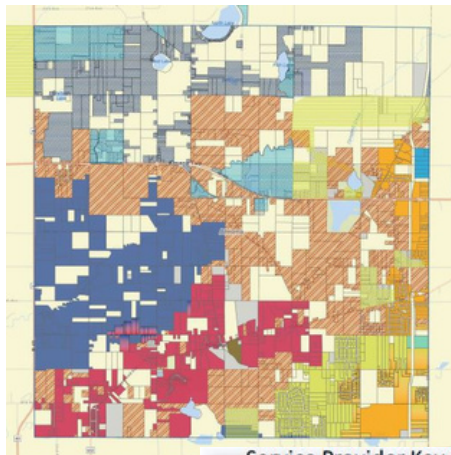
RETAIN
963
JOBS



SUPPORTED INVESTMENT OF
\$58M
IN FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

&

FOSTERED
\$106.42M
ECONOMIC IMPACT



Service Provider Key

Unoccupied (no address)	
Undeveloped (address)	
Unserviceable	
Agricultural (unserviceable)	
Gaps	
Comcast	
Charter	
MEC Fiber	
BCI Fiber	
AT&T Fiber	
Sister Lakes Cable	
Media Com	
Michiana Supernet	
BCI/MEC	
Comcast/MEC	
Comcast/BCI	
Mediacom/MEC	
Mediacom/BCI	
MEC & BCI (2nd & 3rd)	
MEC RDOF	
Mercury RDOF	
Charter RDOF	
BCI ReConnect	

Market Van Buren has been an advocate for internet expansion in Cass and Van Buren counties for several years. Reliable, high-speed internet access serves as the great equalizer for rural communities, as it allows their residents to access the educational tools, employment opportunities, and virtual healthcare resources they need to thrive.

In the past year, Market Van Buren worked with Van Buren County and DCS Technologies to develop a parcel-level, GIS-based map of high-speed internet availability for every property in Van Buren County. Using this map, we were able to support the allocation of approximately \$4.1M by the County and \$987K by townships to support Midwest Energy & Communications application to receive grant funds from the Michigan Office of High Speed Internet (MIHI). If awarded, these funds would expand internet access to approximately 3,900 (92%) of the unserved homes in Van Buren County. Final award announcements will be made in late summer 2023. Meanwhile, Market Van Buren continues to work with the County and DSC Technologies to identify solutions to bring service to the remaining 8% of unserved Van Buren County homes.

In Cass County, Market Van Buren supported the County in securing an MDARD grant to fund the development of a parcel-level, GIS-based map of high-speed internet availability by DCS Technologies, the same consultant used by Berrien and Van Buren counties. In early 2024, an estimated \$1.6B will be available from MIHI to further expand internet access in Michigan. With the MDARD-funded maps, Cass County will be better positioned to attract grant funds to expand internet access to unserved areas in Cass.



Manufacturing Growth Alliance (MGA), a subsidiary of Kinexus Group, helps champion, serve, and advocate for Michigan's small to medium sized manufacturers (SMMs). Since its inception in 2019, MGA has been laser focused on the needs of Michigan manufacturers. We provide our members with the knowledge, strategic guidance, and access to resources they need so they can lead their organization to lasting growth.

MGA is the only trade association in the state focused on supporting small to medium sized manufacturers, because we understand that their needs differ from large manufacturers. We listen and build the right level of services to help manufacturers with talent attraction efforts, industry 4.0 education, and services for their strategic growth. We aim to make Michigan's manufacturers the most prosperous and competitive in the nation.

As a grant administrator for the state's signature Industry 4.0 initiative, MGA has become known as an influential statewide organization serving SMMs. Since 2021, MGA has connected with

**2,368 small
manufacturers**

to increase their awareness of Industry 4.0 (I4.0) technologies. Moreover, MGA has provided grant funding to 78 manufacturers to purchase and implement I4.0 technology, which has resulted in 3,449 Michigan jobs being retained and/or created. In the year ahead, MGA is well positioned to serve even more manufacturers in their Industry 4.0 adoption.



“ MGA has been an invaluable resource since joining a few months ago, and the benefits far outweigh the investment. Not only is it affordable, but it's also provided us with many tools and opportunities to collaborate as we've worked to grow our business. The manufacturing cohort retreat was truly one of the highlights of my year, and helped create a peer group of talented and accomplished leaders that I will consult for years to come as we chart our course and navigate our journey.”

- Rusty Riley, Founder/President of Oronoko Iron Works, Inc and MGA Member.



Michigan Celebrates
Small Business

MichiganCelebrates.org

Michigan Celebrates Small Business (MCSB) is the most prestigious small business awards program in the state of Michigan. The program brings together the resources of collaborative partners and supporters so that they may raise the profile of small businesses in Michigan, build a network of entrepreneurial companies, and tell the stories of successful, growing Michigan entrepreneurs. Kinexus Group is the managing partner for Gala for the fourth year in a row.



ECONOMIC IMPACT

- \$453M in total annual revenue in 2022
 - 57% increase in total annual revenue compared to 2021
- 1,439 full-time equivalent employees in 2022
 - 1,374 in Michigan • 65 out of state
- 498 net new jobs projected for 2023
 - 1,888 in Michigan • 49 out of state



Locations | Websites | Social Media

Benton Harbor Service Center
499 W. Main St.
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Paw Paw Service Center
32849 E. Red Arrow Hwy, #100
Paw Paw, MI 49079

Cass County Admin Building
120 N Broadway Street
Room 219
Cassopolis, MI 49031

Niles Southwestern Michigan College
Campus • Administration Building
3890 US-12
Niles, MI 49120

Next Level Tech Center
315 East Main Street
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Kinexus Group
330 W. Main St.
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

 kinexus group

KinexusGroup.org



MICHIGAN
WORKS!
Berrien • Cass • Van Buren

MiWorks.org



 youth solutions

OurYouthSolutions.org



BridgeAcademySWM.org



BentonHarborYouthBuild.org



MarketVanBuren.org



MGAlliance.org

