



**West
Michigan
Sustainable
Business
Forum**



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2022**

Our Mission



FORWARDING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS SINCE 1994

West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum promotes business practices that advance climate leadership, social justice and the creation of a circular economy. We accomplish this by providing education, sustainable business resources and opportunities for collaboration and civic engagement to businesses and institutions in the regions we serve.

Our Work



LEADING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

The Forum is Michigan's leading organization for beyond-compliance sustainability practitioners, with a membership program that serves our region's most recognizable brands, largest employers, and most innovative entrepreneurs, advocates and educators.



SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The Forum is a safe and impactful space for professional and organizational growth, the development of new relationships, and the co-creation of initiatives that enhance environmental stewardship and economic vitality in partnership with local communities.



CREATING A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

We are supporting the creation of a circular and low-carbon economy in Michigan, uniquely positioned to support manufacturers, small business, and institutions throughout the supply chain in meeting climate and circularity goals.



THE FORUM IN 2022

West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum is the flagship program of a growing network of sustainability practitioners in the state, rooted in the West Michigan tradition of sustainability and sustainable business. We are working to redefine the triple bottom line for this new generation of leadership.



Blandford Nature Center was the 2021 West Michigan Sustainable Business of the Year.



Visit wmsbf.org/members for a directory of current corporate and professional members.

The Forum is celebrating its 29th year in 2022 with a mandate to advance the future of sustainable business in Michigan. We have introduced sustainability to hundreds of organizations and thousands of professionals over the years, hosting the most popular event program of its kind and a rotating portfolio of working groups and initiatives.

Stakeholders and customers are increasingly demanding that businesses and institutions act on the great issues of our time: climate change, racial and economic equity, and the need to develop a circular economy.

There has never been a more exciting time for sustainable business. Our members are working to meet these challenges and we are supporting and accelerating those efforts through education and strategic partnerships that promote adoption of climate solutions, sustainable materials management, environmental and social justice, and green stormwater infrastructure. Learn about our efforts in the pages that follow and at wmsbf.org.

Our Programs



FORUMS

Education
and Networking

Serving professionals and stakeholders in five regions and a virtual statewide program.

Learn more at
wmsbf.org/events.



RESOURCES

Training
and Tools

Serving novice and advanced sustainability practitioners in business, education, government and neighborhoods - in English and Spanish.

Learn more at
wmsbf.org/resources.



PROJECTS

Campaigns
and Initiatives

Outreach, advocacy, and collaboration opportunities developed through a working group and shared capacity model.

Become involved at
wmsbf.org/groups.



HOPE COLLEGE was nominated for 2022 West Michigan Sustainable Business of the Year for its work promoting sustainability on the Lakeshore and mentoring emerging campus sustainability programs, among other accomplishments. Learn more at wmsbf.org/stories.



WEST MICHIGAN FORUM

Typically on the second Monday of each month, our flagship program is the most popular education and networking series for sustainability professionals in the Midwest.



MICHIGAN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS FORUM

Our virtual program provides educational opportunities for professionals throughout the state, while advancing key outcomes for climate leadership, campus sustainability and circularity economy through new statewide projects.



REGIONAL PROGRAMS

This year the Michigan's Great Southwest program expanded to a seven-county region. There are now four MiSBF regions hosting events, educational programs, technical support and advocacy.



LAKESHORE SATELLITE

Event program and engagement for Muskegon and Northwest Ottawa County, focused on community resilience, circular economy, climate leadership, environmental justice and industry.



DENNIS MCKEE of Consumers Energy was recognized with the 2022 President's Award for contributions to the Forum.

Learn more about Dennis, and meet our Staff and Board of Directors at wmsbf.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Circular Economy

We support and elevate efforts of local businesses and institutions working to create a circular economy in their communities and industries.

The Forum is West Michigan's leading advocate for recycling and solid waste diversion. We promote a circular economy mindset and the understanding that waste has economic value, providing support to businesses and organizations through our partnership program and educational engagements.

We are among the only groups in the state working to promote the intersectionality of materials management, climate and justice, including engagement efforts that are helping to inform recycling contamination interventions and market development initiatives

locally and statewide.

In 2022 we launched an expanded circularity program that will encourage the use of recycled content in the state, while working to address a series of local, state and national issues in partnership with industry and the public sector.

Find our recently published design guidelines and seminal MSW valuation study at wmsbf.org/circular. Learn more about our circular economy programs in the following pages.



PADNOS was nominated for 2022 West Michigan Sustainable Business of the Year for its innovative "Sustainability City" pilots, as well as its investments in electric vehicles and DEI. Learn more at wrmsbf.org/circular.



WORKING GROUPS AND SUPPORT

We are providing businesses and institutions resources, guidance, and peer learning to support the adoption or execution of zero waste to landfill initiatives. This includes user groups, roundtables and strategic partnerships.



CIRCULARITY FORUM & RECYCLED CONTENT

The Circularity Forum is challenging manufacturers and major purchasers to support or create end markets for recycled content through design innovation and intentional purchasing.



CLIMATE SOLUTIONS AND FOOD WASTE

In 2023 we will lead statewide coalitions to develop a Food Waste Reduction Road Map and to examine and address end-of-life issues for renewable energy components and energy efficiency solutions. We are working to improve connections between climate solutions and recycling.



SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

We are supporting community-scale efforts to improve sustainable materials management, this year leading a seven-county stakeholder engagement process in Southwest Michigan and again sampling municipal solid waste streams as part of an update to our Michigan MSW Valuation Study.

MEIJER is nominated for 2022 West Michigan Sustainable Business of the Year for its three-year goal to reduce carbon emissions by 50% and its efforts to address plastic pollution, food waste and support green infrastructure. Learn more at wmsbf.org/climate.



Equity and Sustainability

Sustainable business should center social and environmental justice, providing a mechanism for businesses and institutions to dismantle and support alternatives to white supremacy.

Sustainable business has a responsibility to work alongside under-resourced populations and communities of color to address historical disparate impacts affecting members of these communities due to public policy or market-based actions. We are highlighting the potential role of the business community as advocates for business practices and civic priorities that advance social and environmental justice. We are engaging businesses in an active process to identify and eliminate racism, while working to decrease barriers to participation in sustainability for diverse groups.

With support from the Wege Foundation, the Equity Program has become a signature initiative of the modern WMSBF, a model for white-led organizations in the state's sustainability movement. Our full Equity Statement can be found at wmsbf.org/equity. Some recent outcomes are on the following pages.

Working Groups and Projects:

- Equity and Sustainability
- Resource Translation
- Environmental Justice Network
- Resource Inclusion Project
- Benton Harbor Recycling



SOUTH EAST MARKET is nominated for 2022 West Michigan Sustainable Business of the Year for working to address systemic inequities and health disparities in Grand Rapids while building a more sustainable food system. Learn more at wmsbf.org/equity.



MAKING SUSTAINABILITY ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

In partnership with our members and stakeholders, we are working to address inequitable distribution of sustainability resources, such as our recent efforts to help BIPOC businesses and black-majority cities earn recycling grants.



LATINX PARTNERS

This year we provided custom training to the West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, supported sustainability at the Hispanic Festival of Grand Rapids, and launched a Spanish-language education program in Holland.



ENGAGEMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

We are promoting investment in climate solutions and community development as an economic and racial justice imperative, partnering with leading state and federal activists, and advocating for Justice 40 commitments.



ADDRESSING LOCAL IMPACTS OF INDUSTRY

In partnership with the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association, we are working to address environmental justice issues in Southwest Grand Rapids, which has been especially impacted by the operations of heavy industry.



HISPANIC CENTER OF WESTERN MICHIGAN is nominated for 2022 Sustainable Business of the Year for its efforts to empower the Hispanic community and advance sustainability through its green team. Learn more at wnmsbf.org/equity.

Climate Leadership

Our Vision: Through business leadership, Michigan can eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to a future where GHGs in the atmosphere are declining.

Through our members and partners, we are advocating for climate leadership goals and promoting resources for energy efficiency, regenerative agriculture, clean energy and other solutions to reduce emissions and sequester carbon. The investments being made today are going to reshape our economy for the next generation. We are working to accelerate these solutions and make sure they are done right.

This includes important initiatives that protect water quality through green stormwater infrastructure and rainscaping.

We are also partnering with local, national campaigns to advocate for climate leadership in the public sector. We have been active in Michigan's climate solutions planning and have developed expertise to support supply chain and stakeholder education.

Working Groups and Projects:

- Sustainable Business Roundtable
- Campus Sustainability
- Food Council Engagement
- Climate and Circularity Project
- West Michigan Rainscaping
- Green Stormwater Taskforce
- Active Commute Week



VOLTA POWER SYSTEMS is nominated for 2022 Sustainable Business of the Year for developing innovative solutions that have eliminated thousands of fossil-fuel generators from mobile applications. Learn more at wmsbf.org/climate.

West Michigan Sustainable Business Hall of Fame

A lifetime achievement award that recognizes extraordinary contributions to the growth of sustainable business in the West Michigan area over the course of a career.

Meet the 2022 inductees:

1. AMY BUTLER

Michigan State University

Will be remembered for her enormous impact on sustainability in higher education, and her foundational work developing the state's energy office after a long career.

3. LUIS CHEN AGUILERA

WORMIES VERMICOMPOST

Our 2022 Future Hall of Fame Award winner, honoring a local professional whose work deserves greater recognition.

2. MANSFIELD MATTHEWSON

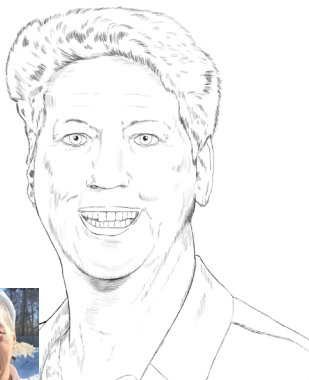
GRAND RAPIDS

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

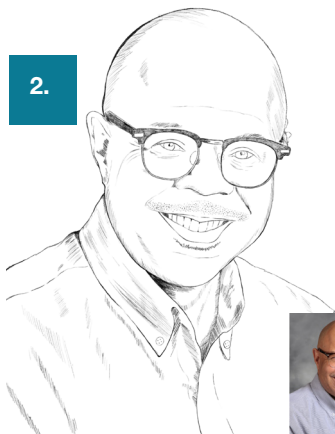
Championed local diverse business enterprises for nearly 40 years. Led supplier diversity program at one of the region's largest institutions prior to his retirement in 2022.

Meet past year's inductees into the West Michigan Sustainable Business Hall of Fame at wmsbf.org/hof.

1.



2.



3.



Thank You to Our Sponsors

We would like to thank the businesses and institutions that have made our work possible this year through support of our Triple Bottom Line Bash and Forum Programs.

Presenting
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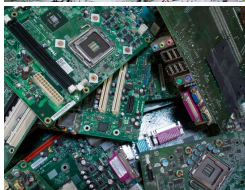
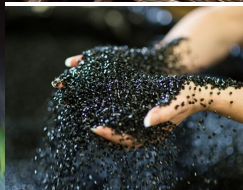
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Contact Erika Murphy
(murperik@gvsu.edu) to begin.



www.gvsu.edu/seidmangrad



We know that design has the power to further the greater good of a place and uplift those who will experience it.

Our projects and philosophies, ultimately, are rooted in contributing to a just and equitable world for our future generations.

Learn more at purearchitects.com

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P.O. Box 68696

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