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Albion EDC to Distribute \$150k Towards Leadership, Trade-Building Training Locally

ALBION, Mich.—As part of the Employer Led Collaborative portion of the Going PRO Talent Fund, the Albion Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) will assist seven local organizations in attaining \$151,025 in leadership and trade-building training over the next year.

As part of the Albion-Marshall Employer Led Collaborative 2.0 (ELC), local organizations benefiting from the funding and their award amounts include:

- Albion College – \$16,280.
- Caster Concepts – \$42,055.
- Consumers Energy of Jackson – \$21,095.
- Decker Manufacturing – \$19,375.
- Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Michigan – \$28,200.
- Marshall Excelsior – \$20,020.
- Shephard's Care – \$4,000.

Of these awardees, Marshall Excelsior serves as the employer lead. The AEDC serves as the facilitator of funds. Locally, Michigan Works! Southwest provides the Going PRO Talent Funds in partnership with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO).

During the 8-week training program, Dale Carnegie trainers will provide leadership training to awardees while trade-building trainings will be facilitated by the Michigan Manufacturers Association and the Michigan Manufacturing Technical Center.

Phil Zeller, CEO, of Dale Carnegie of Southwestern Michigan, said, "It is an honor to serve our neighbors in southwest Michigan with world-class, proven leadership development. Special thanks go out to Virgie Ammerman of the Albion EDC and Jackie Murray of Marshall Excelsior for helping to lead this collaborative and assisting all of us to help create better economic prosperity and collaboration in the Albion/Marshall region of Michigan."



AEDC President and CEO Virgie Ammerman also praised the collaborative nature of the program, saying, “We are extremely grateful to all of the partnering agencies for sharing this opportunity with the Albion-Marshall region. Improving or gaining these new skills increases the employment potential and eligibility potential for employers, as well as bringing more skilled and trained people to the greater Albion-Marshall region.

“Here in Michigan, we need a holistic approach to addressing unemployment and underemployment that starts at the local level,” Ammerman added. “The Albion Economic Development Corporation is proud to be part of this vision and create change on an individual level that will become part of a growing, state-wide ecosystem.”

Jackie Murray, Director of Human Resources at Marshall Excelsior, shared Ammerman’s sentiments.

“Marshall Excelsior is very excited to partner with the other diverse employers to benefit from the Going PRO dollars,” Murray said. “We believe the impact of joining forces will ignite positive community change.

“It all starts with equipping team members and valuing each individual by providing these types of training opportunities. Not only will team members be equipped to handle a variety of situations in the workplace, when they put the new knowledge into action, it will permeate into their personal lives. There is no doubt in our minds that the results will positively impact individuals, families, workplaces, and communities.

“Thank you, Albion EDC, for your vision to bring the organizations together to build a better community. Thank you, Michigan Works! Southwest for your extensive support with this project. Thank you, training providers, for your partnership in bringing robust training programs to us. Thank you, fellow collaborative employers for seeing the benefit of joining forces,” Murray added.

After debuting in Albion last year, the training model has slowly spread to Lansing and other regions and helped create a developed, skilled talent pod.

These awards were awarded as part of the Employer Led Collaborative portion of Going PRO Talent Fund’s 2024 fiscal year. AEDC also served as a facilitator of \$250,000 in awards in the 2023 Albion-Marshall Employer Led Collaborate 1.0 in 2023.

“Kudos to the Albion EDC, Marshall Excelsior, and all the other partners on their second year of success leveraging Going PRO Employer-Led Collaborative funding,” said Bill Rayl, Executive Director of Workforce Solutions at the Michigan Manufacturers Association. “Using these funds not only provides training for employers but also simultaneously advances a broader coordinated community leadership vision is a brilliant economic development best practice strategy that others can and should adopt.”

Ammerman agreed, saying, “Collectively, this program enables us to create a hot spot for business with well-developed employees and employers.”

For more information about the Going PRO Talent Fund and its local utilization, contact the AEDC at 517.629.3926.

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About Albion Economic Development Corporation:

AEDC is a publicly and grant-funded organization that works to attract and develop commercial and industrial businesses for sustainability and longevity by utilizing private and public grants, along with real estate transactions. With its entrepreneurial spirit, AEDC focuses on industrial, housing, commercial, community,



workforce, and funding initiatives within the Albion regional area. AEDC seeks to cultivate a more economically prosperous future and a unified, equitable community.

Editor's Note: *The Albion Economic Development Corporation and Marshall Excelsior logos are attached for your use.*