

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ADA!

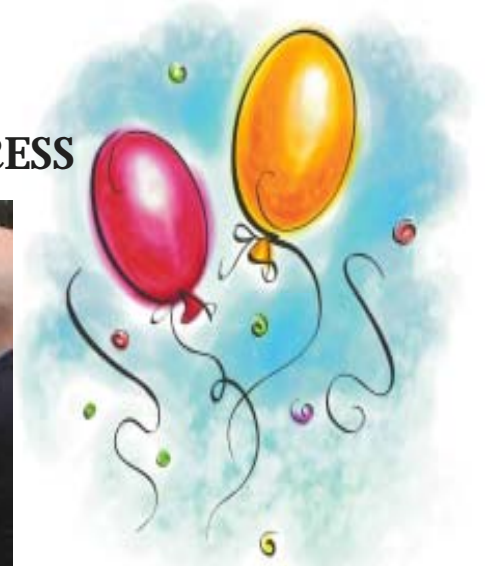
MARQUETTE CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF PROGRESS



Celebrating with sandwiches at the ADA block party.



Bob Laughna (far right), interprets in sign language for speaker Diana Charles, representing U.S. Senator Levin, while Amy Maes of Michigan Protection and Advocacy, Stacy Welling, representing Governor Granholm, and Jim Dellies, Aide to Bart Stupak look on.



Fifteen years ago, President George H. W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), calling for the "shameful wall of exclusion" to come tumbling down. As we celebrated this significant anniversary last month, we note improvements in employment opportunities, transportation, public places, technology and government programs. We've all grown accustomed to curb cuts, ramps, and other accessibility features less common in 1990. Our country is more accessible today thanks to the ADA, and all Americans are better off.

The ADA has begun to change the landscape of our cities and towns, but a civil rights law alone does not create the kind of transformation of attitudes that Americans with disabilities, their families, and allies are fighting to achieve. This kind of change requires widespread discussion, education, and consciousness-raising, and it has to start on a local level. That is why people of all backgrounds came together last month to celebrate the ADA's great accomplishments during a 15th anniversary block party in Marquette. Superior Alliance for Independent Living, Michigan Protection and Advocacy, legislative representatives and friends transformed Baraga Avenue into party central for the afternoon.

The event provided opportunities for mingling, munching and a little bit of education. Speeches were given

by Stacey Welling of Governor Granholm's U.P. office, Diana Charles representing Senator Levin, Amy Maes of Michigan Protection and Advocacy, and others. While recognizing accomplishments, the speakers also recognized the need to continue the momentum. There are bricks in that "shameful wall of exclusion" which still remain and prevent the country from realizing the full promise of the ADA. Many of Americans with disabilities continue to live in poverty and unnecessary isolation. Most adults with disabilities are either not working or not working to their full potential, robbing the economy of the contributions of tens of millions of would-be workers. Children

in special education continue to drop out of school in alarming numbers. The promises of higher education, accessible and affordable housing and transportation, quality affordable healthcare, and a living wage continue to elude many adults with disabilities.

Change is slow but the future is bright. The Assistive Technology Center in Marquette is one example of how new technologies are increasing the independence and productivity of many Americans. Local employers work with Michigan Works! and

other agencies to recruit qualified workers with disabilities to the labor force. School administrators throughout the Upper Peninsula are embracing their responsibility to deliver a world-class education to all their students. With education and exposure, the country is collectively removing barriers to full participation. Paradigms are shifting to the idea that disability is a natural part of the human experience that in no way should limit the right of all people to make choices, pursue meaningful careers, live independently, and participate fully in all aspects of society. Michigan Works! The Job Force Board would like to thank everybody who organized the anniversary event. It was good to get together and recognize how far we've come.



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**In The
Spotlight**

**SUPERIOR EXTRUSION
GROWING STRONG
IN SAWYER**



Next time you step into a Ford F-150, look underneath your feet. Chances are the running boards were made from pieces of aluminum sent out of Marquette County. Located next to the Sawyer International Airport., Superior



Superior Excursions, located next to the Sawyer International Airport in Gwinn, MI.

Extrusion, Inc. (SEI) services the entire Central United States. The aluminum extrusion plant was incorporated in August, 1996, and on December 15, 1998, extruded its first profile. Since then, SEI has continued to grow with an ever-increasing list of satisfied customers. They make aluminum structural shapes for the marine industry, the dock and boat lift industry, snowmobile and ATV trailers. The rolling dock commercials you see on TV, the material for those comes from SEI.

SEI was initially lured to the Sawyer area by the available workforce, buildings and Renaissance Zone perks. Since then they've been growing strong and steady. They started out with about 20 employees, now they run three shifts per day, five days a week. They employ about 70 people now, primarily using Michigan Works! for their human resource needs. Last year they pushed over 10 million pounds of metal.

The Sawyer location has allowed SEI ample room for growth. They bought the land and building from Marquette County and have several plans for ex-

pansion in the works. Last January SEI began a \$550,000 expansion where they put in a device called a hot log saw. Instead of buying raw material they now receive aluminum in 20' logs, then heat them and cut them. This reduces scrap waste and on-hand inventory of raw material. By the way, they don't buy any off-shore metal at all. They attribute their growth to their valued customers and their faith, trust, and confidence in their commitment to their success.

The biggest challenge for SEI according to President and CEO John Marshall has been controlling their energy costs. They use *a lot* of electricity and natural gas. Shipping has also been a challenge says Marshall. "When you're in a niche market like extrusion, you have tons of competition throughout the country." Getting the product to customers on time is imperative. "Everything comes in by truck and everything goes out by truck, and we're kind of on the North end of nowhere." Marshall points out. There really is no viable alternative to trucking at this point.

SEI is dedicated to absolute customer satisfaction. Competitive pricing, high quality surface finish, short lead-times and unmatched customer service are just some of the ways they can help improve the value of consumer prod-



Inside Superior Excursion.

ucts. SEI's motto is "Superior Clients deserve superior people, superior service, and superior products. Michigan Works! The Job Force Board is proud to work with SEI, and we're grateful to have them as an asset to our Central U.P. region.

Growing Business. Harvesting Success.

2005 MICHIGAN'S COOL U.P. SUMMIT



Monday, Oct. 17, 2005

John Bottum University Center, NMU Marquette

Join us for this 1-day information filled event!

Featured Topics:

- Creative Entrepreneurial Communities
- Case Studies— Harvesting Success in Rural America
- Infrastructure— What Needs to Ensure Growth

2005 Cool U.P. Awards

Nominations Available on the Web

- Economic Developer • Cool Collaborator
- Development Projects • Tourism • Product
- Business/Company • Up and Comer

Log on to www.UPEDA.com for registration information and more details.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE CONTACT:

Karen Widmar, UPEDA Marketing Co-Chair
906.439.5919, kwidmar@tds.net





(Picture Courtesy of Northern Waters Photography/Sean Depuydt.)

Will Carne, President
Michigan Works! The Job Force Board

U.P. LEADERS UNITE TO SOLVE WORKFORCE ISSUES THE JOB FORCE BOARD HOSTS 3RD STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Workforce development is recognized as the number one challenge for businesses and economic growth. In June, local government, employers, educators, industry, and other regional leaders came together to strategize about how to build a competitive workforce in the U.P. The Job Force Board's 3rd strategic planning session titled *Creating a Workforce Advantage* focused on issues like how to foster entrepreneurship in

the U.P., how to promote economic development, and how to attract and support business in the U.P. Over 50 people brain stormed and shared ideas.

One of the main goals of the series is to hear the input and expertise from leaders throughout Upper Peninsula. A broad representation of individuals attended, ranging from education, economic and workforce development, community and government stakeholders, and business partners, and with such enthusiasm. Their input and vision has been very important to the Job Force Board's strategic planning initiative. Their insight helps us to deliver the best workforce development policies and initiatives to business, industry and our jobseekers.

With today budget challenges, technological advances, and global

competition, we at The Job Force Board need more now than ever to be able to work together with business, collaborate with economic development and partner with other key organizations to maximize our impact and help our area industry, business, and jobseekers succeed.

We believe it's all of our responsibility to help "inventory, connect, convene and coach" area resources to help build and nurture a quality and sustainable workforce for the region.

Please continue to help us as we all work together aligning and coordinating community resources, and developing deeper linkages between our employers, jobseekers and area workforce and economic development partners. Thank you to all who attended and we look forward to seeing you next time.

JOB FORCE BOARD AND PARTNERS RECOGNIZED FOR BUSINESS RETENTION EFFORTS AND RESEARCH



James Anderson, Michigan Works! The Job Force Board

as well as successful retention of existing businesses. Recognizing the importance of the workforce in economic development, James Anderson with Michigan Works! The Job Force Board, Eric Canada, from Blane Canada, Ltd, Wheaton, Illinois; and Ed Sitar from ComEd / Exelon, City of Chicago partnered on a white paper in 2005 on this subject. The paper, entitled "Workforce Health: Emerging

Challenge Faces Workforce," identified key issues for communities to be aware in order to promote new

economic investment and to retain existing businesses. Business Retention and Expansion International (BREI) recognized the work of this team and their paper, during their June 2005 annual conference in Nashville, Tennessee. During the conference – Eric Canada, Ed Sitar, and James Anderson were awarded an Award of Excellence for an Outstanding Special Business Retention and Expansion Program. This award not only recognizes the work of these three people on this research paper, but also it recognizes the collaborative accomplishments of economic developers across the United States and Canada who were involved in data collection, which supplied the needed data for the research paper.

The report draws attention to the new challenges ahead for workforce and economic development professionals, including:

The current projected growth dynamics will require soft skills like

innovation at both the product as well as production levels in companies. Flexibility and the ability to deal with constant change will be at a premium.

These soft skills are central components of competitive businesses and competitive communities. Limiting the focus to technical skills and job performance leaves a substantial gap which will have a negative economic impact on communities as well as the U.S. economy.

The full version of this paper may be viewed on-line, by visiting www.blanecanada.com or accessing the paper directly at http://www.blanecanada.com/workforce_health_rpt.pdf.

To learn more about business retention efforts in the Upper Peninsula, you may visit www.UPEDA.com or e-mail James Anderson at janderso@jobforce.org.

The health of a community's workforce is a significant driver for new economic development investment

Challenge Faces Workforce," identified key issues for communities to be aware in order to promote new

HUMAN RESOURCES FORUM COMING TO N.M.U.

LEARN ABOUT TEAM DYNAMICS, HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES, WORKER'S COMP AND MORE!

The Upper Peninsula Human Resources Association (UPHRA), the Superiorland Chapter of Human Resource Professional (SCHRP), and the Upper Peninsula Training Network (UPTN) are proud to present the third annual Human Resources and Training Forum on Friday, October 7, 2005. The Forum is scheduled from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM at the Don H.

Bottom University Center on the campus of Northern Michigan University in Marquette. In addition to her keynote speech related to her adventure as the first Michigan woman to reach the North Pole on skis, Frida Waara will be the trainer for a session on Team Dynamics. Trainers for eleven other sessions being offered include Dr. Carl Eiben and attorneys Susan MacGregor

and Amy Maes. Some of the sessions include training on post-injury return to work, ADA, FMLA, and Worker's Compensation, H.R. legal issues, and the top ten H.R. challenges in the U.P. Blue Cross Blue Shield is sponsoring the keynote speaker and other sponsors include AFLAC, the Chip-In Resort and Casino, Michigan Works, the Society for H.R. Management, and

the firm of Garceau, Wenick-Kutz, and Magowan. Vendors will be on hand to showcase H.R. related products and services. The advance cost for the Forum and lunch is \$40.00 for members of the UPHRA, SCHRP, or UPTN, and \$50.00 for non-members. The cost increases by \$10.00 for registrations at the door. For registration information please call Jim Kent at 906-483-1675.

I.T. IN THE U.P.: KEEP A FULL TANK ON THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

The day I was awarded my drivers license, my Dad refused to let me start the ignition of my 1982 Chevette until he tediously explained to me the basics of vehicular anatomy. He said nobody has any business driving a car if they don't know how it works and he wasn't about to let my overanxious adolescent hands take it out of park until I knew how to check my oil and tire pressure. Although he didn't know a mouse from a toaster oven, he would feel the same way about computers.

Admit it. Many of us lack a comprehensive understanding of computer technology and how it relates to our world even though we use them EVERY DAY. That is precisely why you need to attend the 1st Annual Information Technology Conference this month in Escanaba. Even if you're the resident techno-guru in your office, there's sure to be one out of the 20

different workshops to enlighten you. The day-long session is just 99 dollars and covers a myriad of topics from LANs Linux. Here are just a few of the sessions offered.

Getting More from your Website

Steve Kluskens, Web Developer

MediaPro Development Corporation

Organizations are using web technologies like ASP and PHP as new marketing avenues to engage their audiences. The question is no longer, 'How can our website give our company more exposure?' But rather 'What can our website offer our customers which our competition is not?' Includes consultation on your website.

Networking Nuances - the 411 on Networking

Karl Linderoth, Computer Tech Instructor
Beau Boden, Dir. of Tech Michigan Works!

Introduction to Networking for those new to the concept. Come learn the difference between LANs, WANs, and MANs; learn how to tell the difference between an application that is running on your desktop or from across the world; or learn the basics of Wireless Networking so you can enlighten the rest of your workplace!

A Totally Connected Upper Peninsula

Andrew M. Bek, Executive Director
Upper Great Lakes Educational Tech-

nologies

This presentation deals with the UP Link Michigan rural broadband initiative which has been ongoing in the UP since 2003. Findings, goals, and successes will be highlighted, and applications ranging from distance education, health care, libraries, economic development and e-government will be featured.

Check out the website <http://mtec.baycollege.edu/IT> for the full session list and to register. You can also call Mary Dittrich at 800.221.2001, x1227. The conference is September 22 at Bay College in Escanaba. Just don't drive there unless you know how to change a spark plug.

Corner of Events

September TBD
Business After Hours (5:00-7:00)
Forward Financial Credit Union
Call the Rivercities Chamber for more information
(906) 863-2679

September 28
Business After Hours (5:30-7:30)
Michigan Works! The Job Force Board
Elkhorn Station in Manistique
Call the Schoolcraft Chamber of Commerce for more information
(906) 341-5010

September 28
Business After Hours (5:30-7:30)
Delta Do-It Center
Location: Willow Creek Apartments
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information
(906) 786-2192

October 6
Chamber Annual Dinner (5:30)
Chip In's Island Resort & Casino
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information
(906) 786-2192

October 7
Upper Peninsula Human Resource Forum
NMU Great Lakes Room (8:15-4:00)
Call Jim Kent of Portage Health Systems for more information
(906) 483-1675

October 18
Business After Hours (5:00-7:00 CT)
Michigan Works! The Job Force Board
Pine Grove in Iron Mountain
Call the Dickinson Area Partnership for more information
(906) 774-2002

October 20
Comedy Zone (5:30-7:30)
Upfront & Company in Marquette
Call Cheryl Shutty at the Lake Superior Partnership for more information
(906) 486-4841

October 18
Business After Hours (5:30-7:30)
Hilltop RV & Sports Center
Call the Delta County Chamber of Commerce for more information
(906) 786-2192

October 27
OSF Heart of Gold Dinner/Fundraiser
Danforth Place
Call Jessica for more information
(906) 786-3311

