

The Michigan Merit Award Scholarship *By State Representative Tom Casperson, 108th District*

The message of the Merit Scholarship is clear: **HARD WORK COUNTS!** As part of the proposed 2004 Higher Education budget it has been recommended drastically changing the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship (Merit Award) by reducing the amount from \$2,500 to \$500, starting with the class of 2004, and changing the payout structure from prospective to retrospective.

The Merit Award was created in 1999 as a merit based scholarship to encourage students to excel in education. It was funded by the tobacco settlement revenue from the national master settlement agreement. Michigan law requires that the annual settlement payment, approximately \$350 million, to be distributed to the state as follows: 75 percent of the settlement dollars are to be deposited into the Michigan Merit award Trust Fund and 25 percent into the Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund. The scholarship program currently awards \$2,500 to qualified students who attend a Michigan postsecondary institution and \$1,000 to qualified students who attend an out-of-

state institution. In order to qualify for the Merit Award, a student must take the MEAP tests and meet or exceed Michigan standards. Students can earn an additional \$500 for acceptable performance on the 7th and 8th grade MEAP tests.

The governor's FY04 budget recommendation would: reduce the Merit Award from \$2,500 to \$500 to qualifying students, regardless of what institution they attend starting with the class of 2004; eliminate the 7th and 8th grade awards; and change the payment schedule so that the awards are paid for retrospectively.

The Merit Award made a college education more affordable for almost 52,000 high school seniors in the class of 2002, and 49,000 seniors in the 2001 class. Some have said with the current budget the state cannot afford to continue to fund this program. Others advocate a needs-based program over a merit-based one. I support the Merit Award Scholarship program as it currently

stands.

First, it is budgetary and economic times like these that stress the need to invest in our future. The growth of Michigan is tied to the education of our youth. With cuts in education funding at all levels happening, it would be a mistake to eliminate a program that promotes hard working, high achieving students.

Second, there currently exists a multitude of need based financial assistance programs in the state. The Merit Award Scholarship program rewards hard work. If you get the score, you get the scholarship. This program motivates students to do well and rewards them when they do. In addition, I believe such a program encourages parents who need the help to get involved in their children's education. The Legislature is working to hold public universities accountable for steep increases in tuition. The Merit Award Scholarship gives the student and their families the choice of where and how this money is

spent. The 80 percent recommended reduction would raise tuition cost for many freshmen by \$2,000.

Lastly, Michigan needs a well-trained work force. Scholarships like this encourage students to continue their education. Time and time again I hear employers say finding qualified workers is a problem. Programs like Michigan Works! do a great job assisting the work force with training now. Continued education will prevent our youth from needing such assistance in the future.

I will continue to work with my legislative colleagues to keep the Merit Award Scholarship for our children's future.



State Representative Tom Casperson

Kingsford High Seniors Have Reason to Smile

Over twenty seniors from Kingsford High School have more to smile about than just graduating from high school. They have been dually enrolled with Bay de Noc Community College and they have each successfully completed between four and eight college credits.

Dual enrollment allows for high school juniors and seniors, who meet certain eligibility requirements, to get a jump start on their college career and begin taking college courses while still in high school. Schools are required by the Michigan legislature to assist students in participating in college-level course work and may pay for the college tuition and fees out of the state

allotment of money received for each student. College courses eligible for tuition support are academic courses not offered by the local district.

Dual enrollment is open to juniors and seniors in high school who have a 3.0 overall grade point average. They must have the written approval of their high school guidance counselor or principal. Eligible students must be enrolled in at least one high school course, must have taken all of the MEAP high school test and be endorsed in the area in which they wish to dual enroll.

Alex Derwinski has accumulated eight college credits which will be transferred to

Northern Michigan University for the 2003 fall semester. "It was a great experience to have before starting Northern in the fall. The teachers and the environment were great." Alex will study pre-med/chiropractic at Northern Michigan University.

Jennifer Pietila will be taking four college credits with her to Michigan Technological University in the fall where she will study biomedical engineering. "I got a feel for the way a college class is run. We had to do a lot of writing. There is definitely more freedom in a college course and it is up to the student to keep up. I think this will help me in my future classes. I would definitely

recommend dual enrollment to others."

Both Sara Edlebeck and Rachelle Nardi have earned eight credits each through dual enrollment. They both agree stating, "Dual enrollment is a great way to save money and it prepares you for college."

Nancy Jayne, guidance counselor at Kingsford High School, feels dual enrollment is a wonderful opportunity for students. "It allows students the opportunity to complete general education requirements," says Jayne. "Future juniors and seniors are encouraged to complete their MEAP tests early and are encouraged to work with their guidance counselors to determine if they are eligible," noted Jayne.

This summer Bay College B West Campus will be expanding to its new location located at 1401 South Carpenter Avenue in Iron Mountain. Through expanded course offerings we are looking forward to providing even more opportunities to future students. Bay College's West Campus Coordinator Laura Moloney is excited about the move saying, "Bay College is a great start to a four year education. The ease of transferability and now being physically closer to area high schools should encourage students to look into dual enrollment opportunities."

For additional information on dual enrollment, please contact Cynthia Aird at Bay toll free, 1-800-221-2001 ext. 1276.



Bay College Appoints a New Dean of Nursing

After receiving a recommendation from Bay College President Michael Allkins, the Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Linda Lewandowski to the position of Dean of Allied Health and Wellness.

Lewandowski has served as Interim Dean of Allied Health and Wellness for the college since August 2002, when former dean Patti Valensky was named Vice President for Instruction and Student Learning. She began her full-time career at Bay in 2002 when she was hired by the Board as a nursing instructor. Prior to that she worked as Branch Manager and Hospice Director for Marquette General Home Health and Hospice in Escanaba, as well as a Continuing Education and part-time nursing instructor for Bay. She holds an Associate in Science

of Nursing degree (A.D.N.) from Delta College,

along with a Bachelor in Science of Nursing degree (B.S.N.) and a Master in Nursing Administration degree (M.S.N.) both from Northern Michigan University. "She has the necessary credentials that are required by the Michigan Board of Nursing for deans of associate degree nursing programs," said Valensky. Lewandowski holds Registered Nurse licensure in Michigan and is a member of the National League for Nursing, the American Holistic Nursing Association, and the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing.

She is currently an Advisory Committee member for Marquette General Home Health and Hospice and a member of the

Michigan Council of Nursing Education Administrators. She holds Basic Life Support Certification as well as Healing Touch Certification Level I and IIA.

Lewandowski has many years' experience working with continuous quality improvement and serves the college as leader of the Wellness Committee. She has been an active participant of the student Assessment Team for the past three years. "Linda has a high level of initiative, foresight, and ability to carry out complicated tasks. She has many positive qualities and characteristics that enhance her ability to work well with faculty, staff, and the students of the Allied Health Division," said Valensky. "We're fortunate to have someone with her direction and leadership in this position."

Seaborg Center Offers Summer College for Kids

The Seaborg Center at Northern Michigan University has announced its "Summer College for Kids" programs. The week-long sessions are designed for students in kindergarten through 7th grade. They begin June 23 and run through Aug. 1. The cost is \$45 per program. Morning sessions run from 9 a.m. to noon and afternoon sessions run from 1-4 p.m. The schedule for "Summer College for Kids" is as follows:

• July 7-11

Young Astronauts, grades K-1, 1-4 p.m. Prepare for space travel as an astronaut

Turtles and Toads, grades 2-4, 1-4 p.m. Learn about reptiles and amphibians and daily field trips

Rocketry, grades 5-7, 9 a.m.-noon. Investigate, build and launch rockets

• July 14-18

Puzzles and How Things Work, grades K-2, 9 a.m.-noon. Solve puzzles and how things work

Turtles and Toads, grades 3-5, 1-4 p.m. Learn about reptiles and amphibians with daily field trips

Advanced Robotics, grades 5-7, 1-4 p.m. Use LEGO Mindstorms and Robo-Lab to build robots and vehicles

• July 21-25

LEGO Machines, grades K-2, 1-4 p.m. Make sense of simple machines using LEGOS to "get the job done"

Bridge Building, grades 3-5, 1-4 p.m. Plan, build and test bridges of various types

Turtles and Toads, grades 5-7, 1-4 p.m. Learn about reptiles and amphibians

with daily field trips



Northern Michigan University

• July 28-Aug. 1

Young Detectives, grades K-1, 9 a.m.-noon. Solve a mystery using scientific experimentation, critical thinking and problem-solving

Turtles and Toads, grades 2-4, 1-4 p.m. Learn about reptiles and amphibians with daily field trips

Beginning Robotics, grades 3-5, 1-4 p.m. Use LEGO Mindstorms and RoboLab to build robots and vehicles

Science of Backpacking and Wilderness Camping, grades 5-7, 1-4 p.m. Develop scientific strategies to prepare and safely enjoy backpacking and wilderness camping. Students will need to provide their food and a sleeping bag for a one-night camping adventure.

For more information, contact the Seaborg Center at 227-2196.

NMU Offers Childhood Education Course

Northern Michigan University is offering several early childhood education courses this summer. They are designed for educators working with preschool, kindergarten and early elementary children, including required ZA Endorsement courses.

Two courses – child development and learning, and designing learning environments for young children – will be taught by Gretchen Butera, a professor of special education from Indiana University. These courses will be offered during the second summer session of classes, June 30 through July 17.

Butera has more than 15 years of experience as a teacher working in three states. She has also conducted research and training for many years in Head Start, working with the National Head Start Association in the National Head Start Training Academy as well as numerous Head Start programs in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Butera is the recipient of several awards for her teaching, research and service.

Other early childhood courses offered this summer are: early childhood internship and seminar; using children's literature to promote pro-social skills – grades P-3; early childhood mathematics through children's literature; and early childhood science through children's literature.

For more information, visit www.nmu.edu/summer or call Continuing Education and Sponsored Programs at 906-227-2103.

Girls of Today using the Technology of Tomorrow

Computers are everywhere! Have you ever wondered what makes them



work? How about the different things you can do with them? Come and explore the amazing world of computers and discover robotics as you experience hands on activities that allow you to practice real live computer challenges instead of just studying about them. If you are entering 7th, 8th or 9th grade and want to learn more about computers and how they work, you won't want to miss out on GT³!

Planned activities include:

- Building a computer from the ground up
- Installing an operating system on the new computer
- Going wireless– talk to other student's computers
- Learn how computers control robots
- Programming a robot to perform what you want it to do

The registration deadline is July 23. Call 906.786.5802 ext 1227 to register today!

Energy Evaluations Pay Big Dividends

Governor Jennifer Granholm and Michigan Department of Consumer and Industries Services Director David Hollister announced the awarding of a \$25,000 grant to M-TEC at Bay College to launch a Rebuild Michigan program in Delta County.

The program works by providing an energy assessment and then a revolving loan fund to pay for recommended upgrades to the lighting and heating systems.

"The energy savings pay back the loan, and the savings continue after the life of the loan," said Doug Russell of M-TEC which is the local funding agency. "We are the first UP community to get one of these Rebuild Michigan grants and are looking forward to getting some projects started."

The program also has an educational component, Russell said. Starting next fall classroom presentations will be made to increase awareness of young people. "Energy is a global issue and educating our young people about ways to increase energy efficiencies will result in less reliance on imported energy," he concluded.

To learn more about the program contact Russell at 786-5802, extension 1210.

MDCD Announces Winners of "Breaking Traditions" Awards

The Michigan Department of Career Development (MDCD) has selected 23 students from across the state to receive its Breaking Traditions Awards, John Palmer, deputy director for Workforce Programs, announced today. The Breaking Traditions Awards were established to recognize students who have been successful in Career and Technical Education program areas or Postsecondary Occupational programs that are nontraditional for their gender. The students received the awards at a ceremony today in the State Capitol in Lansing.

"We are very pleased to congratulate these students on their successes," Palmer said. "We hope their achievements encourage other students who may be considering a career path that is nontraditional for their gender."

To qualify for consideration, a student had to meet these criteria:

- Be in a Career and Technical Education or Postsecondary Occupational program that is nontraditional for their gender.
- Be enrolled in a high school, career center, or community college occupational program during the 2002-2003 school year.
- Be nominated by a teacher, counselor, administrator, or other personnel employed by the student's school, center, or community college.
- Have satisfactory academic standing and acceptable disciplinary history.
- Have made a contribution to awareness of nontraditional careers through successful participation in one or more of the following activities:

- Completion of a program considered nontraditional for the student's gender.
- Competition in a program-related event or contest.
- Participation in a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO).
- Recruitment of other students into programs nontraditional for their gender.
- Significant contributions to the student's specific Career and Technical Education program.

In addition to being nominated, each applicant was required to provide one letter of support and write a brief narrative explaining his or her choice of career, obstacles faced, and key accomplishments. Locally, Angela Ross of Escanaba received a Michigan Breaking Traditions 2003 Merit Award.

The Breaking Traditions Awards are examples of her hard work and dedication to ensuring educational equity for all students. The Michigan Department of Career Development is the state government agency charged with providing the workforce Michigan needs to enhance and maintain its economy. To this end, the state's career and training development agency is working with employers, K-12 schools, community colleges, and local Workforce Development Boards to develop a comprehensive career development system. For more information about the Michigan Department of Career Development, visit the department's Web site at www.michigan.gov/mcdcd or call 1-866-MY GOALS (voice/TTY).

2003 Schoolcraft County Job Fair

The 2003 Schoolcraft County Job fair was a huge success! There were 29 representatives from local businesses participating on site at the Comfort Inn in Manistique.

A few of the local business whom participated were as follows: Indian Lake State Park, Goodwill, Hiawatha Behavioral Health, Michigan Department of Corrections, Kewadin Casino, Black Bear Publishing, Big Boy, Comfort Inn, Holiday Inn



Express, Males Snyder Drugs, 4C's of the UP, Edward Jones Investment, Indian Lake Golf & Country Club.

All businesses seemed to appreciate the invitation to be at the job fair, and the job fair coordinators were likewise pleased with their involvement in the community.

An average 100 job seeker walked thru the doors and filled out applications provided by the businesses. Many business that were unable to attend had information on site for the job seekers, as well as applications for them to fill out. The Businesses who were able to attend had the privilege of communicating with the job seekers letting them know more about the businesses and the positions currently available.

There were approximately 60 diversified job openings from Schoolcraft County alone posted at the event, as well as addi-

tional postings made available from Mackinaw Island and due to the presence of Michigan Works! at the event, information from job postings across the state was available.

There were positions for all ages, permanent, temporary and seasonal postings. The diversity of the positions ranged from food service to administrative and many nursing position from HHA's, CNA's, LPN's, RN's to Occupational Therapist.

If you missed the job fair, but are still interested in looking for employment, your local Michigan Works! Service Center has a vast array of resources available to you.

Michigan Works! has workshops available, including the Ready for Work workshop, that can help you learn what you need to do in order to get, and to eventually keep a good job. In addition to the workshops,



Michigan Works! has skill and interest assessments designed to determine what type of job you are qualified for. There is also a fully stocked resource room available, providing computers, internet access, and resume writing software to all individuals looking for meaningful employment.

If you would like to learn more about the job seeker services offered at Michigan Works!, please call or stop by your local Michigan Works! Service Center. The contact information is listed on page 8.

Helpful Tips for Job Seeker Success

Looking for and securing a job can be a frightening experience. Whether you are looking for your first job, or looking into changing careers, one thing remains the same; it's hard work. Luckily, Michigan Works! has many services available to help job seekers, and to ease this process.

But before beginning your job search, you must first understand the reality of your situation. Getting a job is a job in itself. It takes time, and hard work, and even though Michigan Works! is more than willing to make your job search as easy and profitable as possible, if you want a good job that matches your skills and abilities, you will need to put in quite a bit of work on your own to find it.

You need to get out and talk to people and do research to discover which businesses are hiring. Michigan Works! regularly posts job openings for thousands of area businesses, but there may be other, less publicized job openings available in your community that your friends and neighbors know about. Research the businesses with job openings that interest you to find out what the businesses do, and what the job opening would require from you. Then, you need to prepare your resume, cover letter and portfolio before speaking to the business. If you are confused about how to do so, Michigan Works! has great workshops and team members available that can help you.

In addition to preparing a resume, you may need to prepare yourself. Ask yourself a couple of questions before talking to the employer. Are you capable of doing the job? Do your skills match what is needed?

Tips to keep a job:

- Show up on time everyday and be prepared to work.
- Act responsibly, and be dependable. If your boss cannot rely on you, you will lose your job.
- Be well groomed for work. Shower, shave, comb your hair, and wear appropriate, clean clothing.
- Be polite at work and respect your boss, customers and coworkers. Employers like individuals who work well in groups, cooperate in teams, and get along well with others.
- Volunteer for the hard assignments. Taking on hard assignments will help you learn more about your job. It also shows your boss that you are an ambitious and valuable part of the team.

Do you believe that you are the best job-seeker applying for this job? If you were the employer, **would you hire you?** If you answered no to any of these questions, you may want to assess yourself.

Michigan Works! has skill assessments available to help determine what jobs you are qualified for, and also interest assessments which can help you decide what careers you would probably enjoy. You may, at this time, decide that you need to improve yourself. If so, Michigan Works! has many valuable workshop available, including **Ready for Work**, that are designed to better prepare you for the workforce. The following workshops are offered regularly, and at no charge to the job-seeker:

- **Managing Change/Assessments** - Easy to do assessments that help you bring your hidden skills and talents out. They also help you decide what interests you have. The workshop includes discussion on current issues.
- **Computer Basics** - Learn basic computer skills, the components of the

computer, and how they interact. Learn to use word processing software to create resumes and cover letters and how to use the internet as a tool for your job search.

- **Computer Lab** - Utilize computer systems to do your job search, access educational web sites, practice typing, OPAC, and follow up or complete any assignments.
- **Resume, Thank you & Cover Letter writing** - Discussion and tips on how to write an effective resume and cover letter that will get you noticed.
- **Labor Trends/Job Search** - Learn new techniques that you can apply to your job search, both online and in networking. Learn to use labor market statistics to help you decide what choice of employment your future has to offer.
- **Ready for Work** - *Would you hire you?* Learn about employment issues and get tips for interviewing. Knowing the right things to do and say when job



hunting can make you successful!

- **Budgeting/Self-Assessment Review, and Occupational Outlook** - We use this time to review assessments from the *Managing Change/Assessments* class and also to present you with budgeting alternatives and forecasts for specific occupations.
- **Networking** - Discover successful job search methods. Leave with a better understanding of the power of networking and how your own personal list of contacts can help you find employment.

You need to think of yourself as a salesperson. Hiring you will cost the business a large amount of time and money so if you want the job, you need to be able to convince the employer that you are worth every penny. Also, remember that selling a product, or in this case, your services as an employee, is easiest if your skills and abilities fit what is needed, so take advantage of opportunities like the workshops provided by Michigan Works!, and don't be afraid to look into training opportunities at your local colleges.

If you take this advice, you will be a success. But remember that you are not alone. The team members at Michigan Works! are highly skilled, and are trained to help people like you find good jobs. The doors of Michigan Works! are open to everyone, so feel free to stop by or call your local Michigan Works! Service Center.



Michigan Works! provides services to meet all of your human resources needs! Call Today!

- Job Placement
- Employer/Employee Matching
- Skill Assessment and Employment Matching Tools
- Business Enhancement, Skill Building, and Employment Retention Workshops
- Access to Meeting, Training, and Interviewing Facilities
- Phone, Fax, Copier, and Internet Resources



Benefit from workshops at Michigan Works!

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Community Events

June 25
Business After Hours
Held at Irish Oaks
Delta County Chamber of Commerce
Call (906) 786-2192 for more information.

July 11
Safety Training
HAZWOPER 8 hr.
M-TECSM at Bay College
Call (906) 786-5802 x 1510 for more information.

July 14-18
Safety Training
HAZWOPER 40 hr.
M-TECSM at Bay College
Call (906) 786-5802 x 1510 for more information.

July 14
Business Showcase
Elder Agency/Vineyard
Lake Superior Community Partnership
Call (906) 226-6591 for more information.

July 21
Safety Training
Crane Inspections
M-TECSM at Bay College
Call (906) 786-5802 x 1510 for more information.

July 30
Business After Hours
Held at the Delft and sponsored by upcars.com and the Delta County Jaycees
Delta County Chamber of Commerce
Call (906) 786-2192 for more information.

August 11
Business Showcase
Peninsula Bank- Marquette Office
Lake Superior Community Partnership
Call (906) 226-6591 for more information.

www.jobforce.org

ALGER COUNTY:
114 W Superior Street Suite 4
Munising, MI 49862
906-387-4937 / Fax 906-387-4938

DELTA COUNTY:
2831 N. Lincoln Road
Escanaba, MI 49829
906-789-9732 / Fax 906-789-1904

1-800-285-WORKS!

DICKINSON COUNTY:
200 Fairbanks
Iron Mountain, MI 49801
906-774-3647 / Fax 906-774-6066

MARQUETTE COUNTY:
1498 O'Dovero Drive
Marquette, MI 49855
906-228-3075 / Fax 906-228-4372

MENOMINEE COUNTY:
2604 10th Street
Menominee, MI 49858
906-863-9957 / Fax 906-863-9986

SCHOOLCRAFT COUNTY:
200 North Maple Street
Manistique, MI 49854
906-341-1111 / Fax 906-341-1112