

Rotary International: Investing in our Local Communities

Rotary International is pleased to announce an award of \$8,000 for a Community Assistance Program Grant to the four Rotary Clubs of Marquette County. The Grant Award was solicited to facilitate the signage of the Noquemanon Trail Network throughout Marquette County.

Grant writer, Rotarian Sandy Spoelstra, (Marquette Rotary Club) Lake Superior Community Partnership Community Development Coordinator requested the grant funds to, "assure that our youth and adult recreational enthusiasts, as well as, visitors to our community can locate and use our magnificent scenic trails. At this point in time it is difficult to locate trail heads to enter the trail system for use on a daily basis, let alone guide visitors to the sites."

The four local Rotary Clubs: Marquette Rotary,

Ishpeming Rotary, Rotary West, and Breakfast Rotary will be actively involved in the signage process in conjunction with the Noquemanon Trail Network Council, the local "Friends of the Trail" enthusiasts.

The Noquemanon Race Director, Jon Mommaerts stated, "the signs would help out the ski marathon on two very important ways. First, it would substantially reduce the volunteer time needed to set up and tear down the kilometer markers on the latter half of the racecourse. Secondly, it would solidify the trail as a permanent non-motorized recreational site in the Midwest."

Noquemanon Trail Council President, John Sonderegger stated, "Support like that offered by The Rotary Clubs of Marquette County is crucial to the success of the Trail Network."

Newly appointed Rotary District Governor Jim Collins and a Rotary

International Representative presented the Grant Award on July 10th, to the four Marquette County Rotary Club Presidents: Mary Yelle-Ishpeming Rotary, Anne Spear-Marquette Rotary, Bob Eslinger-Rotary West, Shawn Waggoner-Breakfast Rotary.

For more information regarding the Rotary Grant Award, please contact Sandy Spoelstra at the Partnership office at 226-6591 or 486-4841, or email sspoelstra@chartermi.net.



Uppertunities: Cost Containment Summit II

The fall *Uppertunities* will feature an issue of critical importance to businesses of all sizes- the rising cost of health care insurance. Cost Containment Summit II will be held at Bay College on September 11, 2002.

A key component of the workshop will be the presentation by CHIMR (Coalition for Health Insurance Market Reform), where they will review the reform efforts as they affect Michigan. Other issues in this day-long event will be:

- The rising cost of health insurance: explanations, best practices, and predictions
- Changes like mental health coverages
- Pharmaceutical costs and what some employers are doing
- Best practices in getting the word out to employees, setting up wellness programs, stemming claims and so on.

Uppertunities: Cost Containment II is part of the continuing professional development series for UP businesses. Cost to participate will be \$49 for Chamber or EDA members and \$59 for others. The workshop will include lunch.

Uppertunities is hosted by the Delta Area Chamber of Commerce, Delta County EDA, and Bay College/M-TEC. Co-sponsors will include Michigan Works and First Step.

In addition to the workshop, a marketplace will be available featuring providers of health care products for business. To register or for more information, contact (906) 786-2192, or watch the website www.DeltaMi.org

See Delta County by Rail!

All aboard! On Saturday and Sunday, September 14-15 the Chamber, in conjunction with the Duluth South Shore and Atlantic division of the Soo Line Historical and Technical Society will be sponsoring three passenger train excursions- two half-day and one full day.

Those who remember travel to and from the UP on the old 400 will want to relive those days, and those to whom rail transportation is something new are certain to enjoy this trip back in time.

On Saturday morning the train will make a round trip to Little Lake, returning by noon. In the afternoon, it's a round trip to Hermansville and a stop at the IXL Museum. The all-day excursion on Sunday is to Marinette, Wisconsin, with a picnic lunch included in the fare.

The train will be powered by the antique Soo Line 2500 diesel locomotive and will consist of a dozen passenger cars with wide comfortable seats. The first class cars are privately owned, restored cars including a dining car with tables, lounge cars and even some with small private roomettes, likened by a passenger on a previous excursion as something out of the Orient Express.

Tickets are priced as follows:

½ day coach	\$45
½ day 1 st class	\$70
Full day coach	\$85
Full day 1 st class	\$120

A children's and senior citizen discount of \$10 is available on the Saturday morning excursion only.



A commonly asked question is, "What is the difference between coach and first class?" The Ambiance of the first class cars and the fact that first class passengers have exclusive access to these special cars would be reason enough to ride first class. In addition, morning continental breakfast and afternoon snacks are provided as part of the ticket.

All passengers can buy refreshments in the concessions car that is being staffed by the Ambassadors of Delta County. Proceeds from sale of concessions will be shared by the Ambassadors and also directed to the restoration of the Soo Line 730 steam locomotive currently on display in Gladstone.

"Train excursions fund the restoration and acquisition of old train equipment," said Bill Plichta, known in train circles as "Cleveland Bill." Plichta, a native of Wakefield, is a long time train enthusiast who shares his love of old trains with anyone who asks... and some who don't. "The Society recently purchased a DSS&A road switcher built in 1945, and we are raising money to move it from Springfield, Illinois to Duluth, where it will be restored," said Plichta.

Tickets are on sales at the Chamber or can be ordered using the on-line order form found at www.deltami.org.

Free On-Line Tool Details Job Skill Requirements

The WorkKeys Service Center located at the M-Tec at Bay College recently announced that students and adults looking to succeed in a career have a new tool to help them determine the skills required for a specific job. An on-line program combining career exploration with a database of skills required in more than 1400 American occupations is now available free on ACT's website.

ACT, Inc. is the nonprofit organization best known for its educational achievement tests such as the ACT Assessment, its college admission and placement exam and WorkKeys occupational testing. The database of occupational skill is based on personal interviews with over 30,000 individuals employed in these occupations with companies throughout the U.S.

The new on-line information incorporates ACT's World of Work Map – an interactive map matching career duties with personal interest- and Work-

Keys occupational profiles- a database of skills based on American jobs that have been profiled through ACT's WorkKeys Service Centers. WorkKeys is ACT's job skills assessment program, used by thousands of employers, employees and schools nationwide.

"Through this website, users can think about what they like to do, then explore jobs and find out what skills are required," said Brady Nelson, WorkKeys Administrator at the M-Tec at Bay College. "The next step is to take skills assessments to determine your own level of skills, and then arrange for education or training, if needed, to bring you up to the skill levels you will need for career success."

While using the website, users are first asked to decide which they would most enjoy working with. When and area is selected, the website guides the user to explore careers that match their work interests. Users can then select a career, find

an example of college majors and occupations that fit that career and read a profile of a typical person working in the career. From there, users can look at the skills that are needed in the chosen career.

"Often adults who are working in a career are puzzled about why they are not making progress," said Nelson. "Sometimes they are missing skills but have no way of knowing. The first step in finding out is to determine what skills are needed from the job and how you measure up. From there, you just select the right training. It can mean the difference between career success and failure." Individual interested in documenting occupational job skills can contact M-Tec by calling 906-786-5802, ext. 1211.



Bay de Noc Community College Receives the Largest Grant in the College's History



Bay de Noc Community College received notification on Wednesday, July 24 that it has been awarded a \$2 million Michigan Energy Efficiency Grant from the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC). This grant, the largest non-construction grant in Bay College's 40-year history, will be used to establish "Northern Lights," a revolving loan fund designed to assist Upper Peninsula businesses, school districts, and local government agencies in the purchase and installation of energy efficiency improvements, with the savings on their utility bills paying back the loan.

The Michigan Technical Education CenterSM (M-TECSM) at Bay College responded to the MPSC's request for energy efficiency pre-proposals in late March. More than 100 proposals were submitted statewide, and twelve of them (including Bay College's) were identified as "more likely" to meet the MPSC's criteria for funding. Final proposals representing more than \$22 million in funding requests were submitted in June, with the MPSC having \$12 million available for distribution.

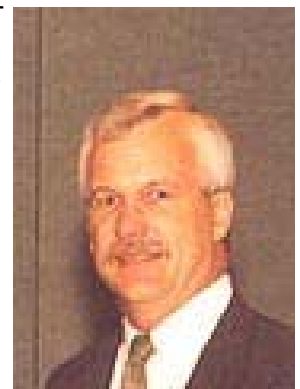
In awarding these grants, the MPSC focused on projects showing the most promise to, among other things:

1. develop or improve energy efficient technologies, including those advanc-

- ing the use of alternative fuels
2. improve the efficiency of energy consumption
3. increase the development of emerging technologies, including fuel cells
4. improve the efficiency of energy production and distribution
5. increase the availability distribution, and market share of various energy efficient technologies
6. demonstrate the application of these technologies.

Michigan Energy Efficiency Grants are funded through the Low Income and Energy Efficiency Fund, established in the Customer

Choice and Electricity Reliability Act of 2000. The purpose of the fund is to provide shut-off and other protection for low-income customers and to promote energy efficiency by all customer classes. The fund results from securitization savings that exceeded the amount needed to achieve a 5% rate reduction for residential and business customers.



Jim Bennie of M-TecSM

Sponsor a page in the Michigan Works! Business is UP-Date

The Michigan Works! Business is UP-Date is a respected area newsletter providing local business, economic, and educational information to over 3,500 business professionals throughout the Central Upper Peninsula.

There are various sponsorship opportunities for the Michigan Works Business is UP-Date Newsletter insuring that all businesses can find the publicity that they are looking for within our pages.

For sponsorship information contact Rob Carviou at:

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- Fax: (906)-789-9952
- rcarviou@jobforce.org



Making Public Education Work

by: Stephen Adamini State Representative, District 109

In my 20+ months of serving as a State Representative, I've been fortunate enough to get a new perspective on how our state's public education system functions. I was educated in the Negaunee Public Schools. My wife has been a schoolteacher for over 30 years before recently retiring from the Gwinn Area Public Schools. I have two adult children who have gone through the Marquette Area Public School system. Needless to say, I've gotten a good perspective of how schools function based on my being a student, husband, and father.

In my role as State Representative, I am now fortunate to be able to participate in discussions about public education across the state and determining what steps can be taken to continually strive to keep Michigan schools the very best in the nation. As a part of that discussion, I've continued the tradition of hosting the annual Upper Peninsula Education Legislative Summit, where officials from around the state join us at Northern Michigan University to discuss the educational concerns facing rural U.P. schools. To most of my legislative colleagues, the experience can be described as "eye-opening" and "a learning experience." They have never left disappointed.

When analyzing the best practices of some of the highest performing school districts in the state, certain traits seem to exist forming a common thread. A significant part of this common thread is one that goes often times unappreciated. In fact, with the struggling economy it may even be taken for granted.

It is in this short Back-to-School essay that I want to recognize the efforts of the business community in general for partnering with public education. It is positive efforts such as this that go unnoticed, with the focus too often on negatives such as declining enrollment and a greater need for economic development.

An old African proverb states that "it takes a whole village to raise a child." Speaking from my various perspectives as student, husband, father, and elected official, I can honestly say that I'm proud to live in an area that

commits as strongly to our young people as the Upper Peninsula.

Part of that commitment is our sense of community. We don't have a separate and distinct government, schools, business, and non-profit sector, but rather we have a community where each sector works with the others to provide the necessary webbing for a kind of safety net for our area's young people. It is this safety net that makes us special.

So many areas of our state are plagued by schools with some of the following: shockingly low graduation rates and test scores along with abnormally high criminal activity, truancy, and dropout rates.

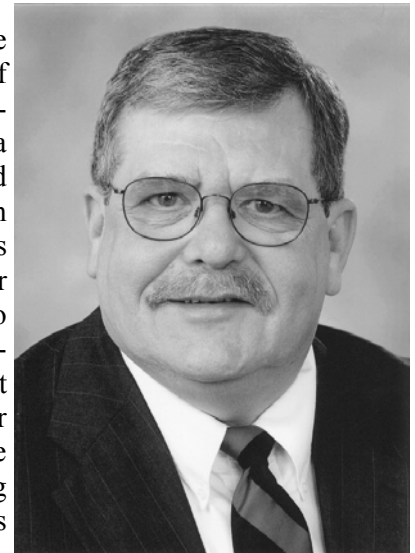
Thankfully, we are not.

The benefits derived from a business-school partnership are many. Whether its young people learning new ideas and new perspectives or learning how to practically apply what they've been studying, together it enables us to better prepare our young people to learn the necessary skills for a developing 21st century workforce. The school-to-work programs alone have created a wealth of opportunity for youngsters interested in varying jobs throughout our communities. Businesses responded by opening their doors to kids looking for ways to test the waters of real life and helping those kids answer the question: "Is this line of work right for me?"

But it hasn't stopped there. The school-to-work programs have been infectious to the point where more and more businesses are adopting work-to-school programs, enabling their workforce to develop and maintain skills essential to their profession, whether they be trade-oriented, management, or entrepreneurial.

Our times are changing, and changing quickly. I've only recently begun to explore the wonders of the Internet and broadband technology and how it seems to make the world so much smaller. We can now shop for items impossible to find in the U.P., read newspapers from around the world, and communicate with people in an electronic instant.

Facing the struggles of our economy and a school aid system which has been, over the past two years, anything but certain, our schools are battling problems such as declining enrollment and crumbling



Stephen Adamini
State Representative, District 109

buildings. While the business community has certainly been doing wonderful things in our public schools across the Upper Peninsula, your support right now may be critical. Businesses can help give school programs much needed stability and foresight by making longer-term commitments to school-to-work programs and by continuing the practice of loaning out human resources so kids can tap the brain of a real world professional.

Please remember that it really does take a whole village to raise a child. For every child that drops out of school or does not graduate, we are not faced with a school failure, but rather a community failure.

I want to say "thank you" to those partners in education who have been participating with public schools, and I want to send an open invitation to all those who would like to be. Please contact your area school district Superintendent to see all the ways you can help develop our future, one child at a time.

Author's Note: Stephen Adamini is the State Representative for the 109th House District, currently Marquette and Alger counties but expanding to include Luce and Schoolcraft. He can be reached toll-free at 1-888-429-1377 or via email at dist109@house.state.mi.us. He welcomes any and all comments, and thanks you for reading.

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