

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## 2021 BUSINESS EXPANSIONS

ORONOKO IRON WORKS \$1.6M

Baroda

SPECIAL-LITE \$2.3M

Benton Charter Township

WHIRLPOOL CORPORATION \$67.6M

City of Benton Harbor

BOS CONCRETE \$1M

Sodus

EDGEWATER AUTOMATION \$2.9M

City of St. Joseph

BLENDCO \$1.4M

Stevensville

## NEW BUSINESS STARTS

ANNZRACKZ, LLC \*

NOVARA SALON \*

ADVANCED PRACTICE  
INTEGRATED HEALTH \*

CASA CLEANING SERVICES \*

LIGHTHOUSE FITNESS STUDIO \*

PARK GROVE PLACE \*

THE AWARE LAB FOR  
MOVEMENT AND CREATIVITY \*

THE GOLDEN RULE  
JEWELRY AND BOUTIQUE \*\*

LOCAL POUR \*

VILLAGE VET \*

CALDWELL LAWN  
SERVICE, LLC ▲

BIRTH QUEENS AND  
MILK QUEENS, LLC ▲\*

MAID TO BE, LLC \*

ND & D'S CLEANING  
SERVICE, LLC ▲\*

BENTON HARBOR  
BEAUTY ACADEMY, LLC ▲\*

VISUAL  
PERFORMANCE CENTER

▲ BLACK OWNED \* WOMAN OWNED ★ VETERAN OWNED

# A YEAR OF REMARKABLE PROGRESS

Our community showed a resiliency and strength, as we fought through another year of the pandemic. Despite these challenges, we achieved impressive

results because of the hard work from local, regional and state agencies. We engaged in partnerships and collaborations that led to the creation of new housing in downtown Benton Harbor; and there is more on the way. New small businesses were opened. Existing businesses grew in size, created new jobs, and invested in new technology. Projects like the Water Taxi, Move to Michigan and Berrien County Community Profile will grow our economy by supporting tourism and attracting new people to our area.

As we enter a new year, our mission remains the same; to provide high level economic development solutions in Berrien County. We will strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones, grow employment opportunities, increase the tax base, and add to the economic vibrancy of our area.

Cornerstone Alliance is committed to finding solutions for businesses of all sizes by providing access to resources and programs that help launch and grow our local economy. Because of your support and investment, we will continue these important efforts that will ensure a growing community.



## JOHN JANICK

*Chairperson,  
Cornerstone Alliance Board of Directors*

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**JOHN  
JANICK**  
*Jako Holdings,  
LLC*



**MICHAEL A  
TODMAN**  
*TMA Limited,  
LLC*



**BRYAN  
VON DORPOWSKI**  
*JR Automation*



**CHRIS  
COOK**  
*Abonmarche  
Consultants, Inc.*



**GLORIA  
ENDER**  
*Freedom  
Finishing*



**JOEL  
GEBBIE**  
*American  
Electric Power*



**SCOTT  
GEIK**  
*First Merchants  
Bank*



**SHELLEY  
KLUK**  
*Indiana  
Michigan Power*



**TIMOTHY  
MARTIN**  
*Fifth Third Bank*



**TODD  
OBREN**  
*1st Source Bank*



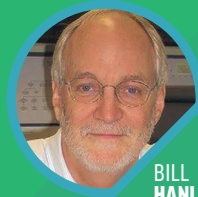
**TERRY  
O'ROURKE**  
*United Federal  
Credit Union*



**NORMA  
TIRADO-  
KELLENBERGER**  
*Spectrum Health  
Lakeland*



**RICHARD  
VILLA**  
*Villa Environmental  
Consultants, Inc*



**BILL  
HANLEY**  
*Vail Rubber  
Works, Inc*



**SCOTT  
MCFARLAND**  
*Honor  
Credit Union*



**KEN  
WHAH**  
*Hanson  
Logistics*

## OUR TEAM



**ROB CLEVELAND**  
*President & Chief Executive Officer*



**CHRISTINA FRANK**  
*Vice President, External Affairs*



**BRANDON CAMPBELL**  
*Director, Women's Business Center*

**CREATING JOBS, ATTRACTING  
NEW BUSINESS AND EXPANDING  
EXISTING BUSINESSES IN  
MICHIGAN'S GREAT SOUTHWEST**



**CATHY TILLEY**  
*Manager, Business Development*



**ZACH VAUGHN**  
*Project Manager, Physical and Business Development*



**JESSICA BOYD**  
*Manager, Marketing and Communications*



**KRISTEN PATZER**  
*Manager, Women's Business Center*



**ASHLEY BUTLER**  
*Director, Community Engagement*



**KYLE SMITH**  
*Community Immersion Specialist*



**MISSY HOLDEN**  
*Director, First Choice*



**MICHAEL DAVIS-YATES**  
*Coordinator, Business Development*



**JIM FINAN**  
*Business Development Consultant*

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



**\$87.9M** NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENT



**98** QUALIFIED LEADS

**93** BUSINESS RETENTION / ASSISTANCE CALLS



**1062** SMALL BUSINESS CLIENTS TRAINED



**16** NEW BUSINESS STARTS



**5** SITE DEVELOPER VISITS IN BERRIEN COUNTY

## NEW PROPERTY IN THE WORKS FOR ORONKO IRON

Oronoko Iron Works closed on a new property in Bridgman in January with more than 50,000 square footage to work with. More space allows room for more equipment, which will provide more jobs to the Berrien County workforce population.





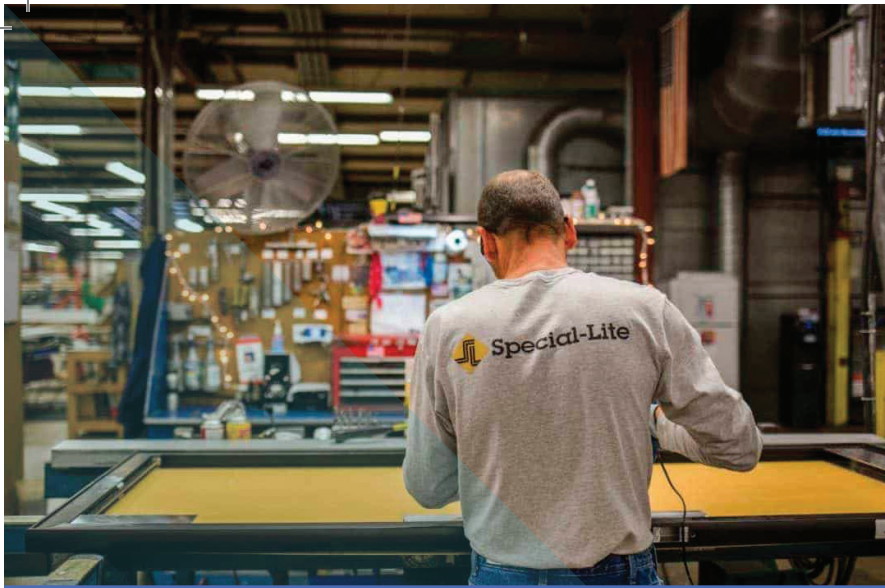
## 100,000 SQUARE FOOT SPEC BUILDING APPROVED IN BENTON TOWNSHIP

New construction of a 100,000 square foot building in the Cornerstone Industrial Park was approved by the Benton Charter Township Planning Committee in March. Cornerstone Alliance secured CopperRock Construction as the developer.

## SUPERVISOR SKILLS TRAINING MICHIGAN MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Cathy Tilley, Cornerstone Alliance Business Development Manager, held an 18-hour interactive course with five companies at the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center to help further equip participants with the knowledge and skills needed to become effective leaders. The participants we provided with additional leadership skills necessary to relate to subordinates, peers and their managers in a productive and efficient manner.





## SPECIAL-LITE RELOCATES ARKANSAS OPERATION TO BENTON HARBOR

Special-Lite announced it will be moving its fiberglass pultruding and manufacturing from Arkansas to Benton Charter Township. The company anticipates investing up to \$2.3 million for building renovations, machinery and equipment for its facility located on Empire Avenue. In addition to hiring 35 new employees immediately, this expansion will create over 60 new jobs over the next three years.



## CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS BENTON HARBOR PROJECTS

Crain's Detroit Business released a feature highlighting ongoing projects in Benton Harbor. Articles include information about the City Center Lofts, Houndstooth, Pipestone Street development, Harbor Shores, Whirlpool, and more. Links to these articles can be found on our website under the News tab.





## CITY CENTER LOFTS CELEBRATES COMPLETION

Cornerstone Alliance and Cressy Commercial Real Estate celebrated the completion of City Center Lofts with a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 29. This development, located on the City of Benton Harbor's historic Main Street, is key to attracting more residents and new business. The City Center Lofts building is a mixed-use space and includes two commercial suites and 16 neo-industrial style lofts featuring exposed ductwork, spiral staircases, and 16-foot ceilings.



## DRIFTWOOD OPENS DOORS AFTER EXPANSION

Driftwood Summer Shop, a staple of the Sister Lakes community in Dowagiac, celebrated its reopening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony May 27. This expansion, aided by the microloan program at Cornerstone Alliance, includes the addition of a full craft coffee menu with locally roasted coffee beans supplied by Forte Coffee, new arcade machines, and more.



## CHRIS FRANK EARNS COVETED CEcD DISTINCTION

Cornerstone Alliance's Vice President of External Affairs, Christina Frank, earned the designation of Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). The designation denotes a mastery of skills in economic development and professional attainment. Frank is only the 45th CEcD in the State of Michigan and Cornerstone Alliance is one of only four Economic Development organizations in the State of Michigan with two CEcDs.

## BOS CONCRETE BREAKS GROUND IN SODUS

Bos Concrete broke ground at their new location on May 13 in Sodus. The company is eagerly anticipating the benefits the second location will bring to their business. The new plant will be state-of-the-art, capable of producing 200 yards of concrete an hour and 2,000 yards of concrete a day. The \$1 million dollar investment will provide a dozen new jobs at the site. Mark and Mike Bos have operated Bos Concrete in Coloma since 2000.



## WATCH OUR BRAND IN ACTION

Cornerstone Alliance released a video on social media in June highlighting the activities and progress made in our community throughout the past four years. The video sheds light on the work



Cornerstone Alliance is doing to increase population, create better-paying jobs, and improve quality of life in Southwest Michigan, while it continues to be Berrien County's lead economic development agency.

## WATER TAXI LAUNCH MAKES WAVES

Over Labor Day Weekend, Cornerstone Alliance sponsored a free water taxi service, providing transportation to over 300 riders throughout the harbor over the three-day period. The Wayfinding App (ExploreMIShore.com), used to show pick-up and drop-off times and locations, saw over 1,500 unique users and over 2,300 site visits. Cornerstone Alliance plans to offer the Water Taxi throughout summer weekends in 2022, Memorial Day - Labor Day, starting with the KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship.





## WHIRLPOOL BREAKS GROUND FOR MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

On August 3, 2021, officials from Whirlpool Corporation, along with federal, state and local officials, celebrated the groundbreaking of the new multi-family housing development in downtown Benton Harbor. The Whirlpool investment of more than \$20 million dollars, will construct the state-of-the-art, four-story housing complex that will include 80 units on the 10-acre site located at the intersection of the Paw Paw and St. Joseph Rivers.

Pictured: Congressman Fred Upton  
Marc Bitzer, CEO of Whirlpool Corporation  
Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer  
Mayor Marcus Muhammad, City of Benton Harbor



## SMALL FISH, BIG PITCH COMPETITION BOOSTS SMALL BUSINESSES

The Women's Business Center (WBC) at Cornerstone Alliance partnered Holt Bosse in hosting the inaugural Southwest Michigan business pitch competition, "Small Fish, Big Pitch," on Sept. 29. Three businesses were awarded a total of \$100,000 by Holt Bosse to use toward their marketing needs. Local small businesses throughout the tri-county area registered for the competition, with nine making it to the final round, where they made their business pitch to a live audience and judges.



## WAYFINDING APP GUIDES LOCALS & VISITORS

Cornerstone Alliance, with assistance from Holt Bosse, produced a wayfinding app that allows users, both local and visitors to the area, access by visiting [ExploreMIShore.com](http://ExploreMIShore.com) on any device. The app will suggest and provide navigation to restaurants to try and sites to see. It will also include the Water Taxi schedule with pick-up and drop-off locations during summer 2022.



## **BIKE TRAILS ARE ROLLING INTO BENTON CHARTER TOWNSHIP**

On October 6, Benton Charter Township gave the go-ahead to Whirlpool Corporation and Cornerstone Alliance on a multi-phase project that will create a new mountain bike track and expand the bike trail system into new areas of the community. The first phase of the project is scheduled to be completed by mid-2022. “This project will enhance our community by giving Township residents more ways to get outside and enjoy the natural beauty of our area, as well as increase the value of homes along the trail,” said Township Supervisor Cathy Yates.

## LOCAL CONTRACTORS GET A PEEK AT THE FUTURE

On Sept. 1, Cornerstone Alliance organized a gathering of local contractors to learn from project managers about future bid opportunities in the Benton Harbor area. More than 40 people were in attendance, representing more than 25 local companies.

## CORNERSTONE ALLIANCE AWARDED SITE READINESS GRANTS

Cornerstone Alliance was recently awarded three site-readiness grants, one from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and two from Indiana Michigan Power (AEP). The industrial sites, located in Lake Charter Township and Benton Charter Township, will produce great potential for future business growth and investment in these areas.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE GUIDE PROVIDES VALUABLE AREA INSIGHTS

On August 4, Cornerstone Alliance unveiled a 62-page community profile of Berrien County. The profile contains detailed information on the demographics, housing market, culture, health care, education, jobs, and business support available throughout the county. The profile will be used as a recruiting tool and resource for attracting businesses and talent into the area.



Southwest  
MICHIGAN  
BERRIEN COUNTY COMMUNITY PROFILE

## INVESTORS

1st Source Bank	Berrien Community Foundation	Creative Landscaping, Inc.	Edward Jones - Becky Young	Joel & Jackie Gebbie	Randy Hyrns
Abonmarche Consultants Inc.	Berrien County	Cressy Commercial Real Estate	Gloria Ender	Scott & Maria Geik	IBEW 153
AEP / D.C. Cook Nuclear Power Plant	bread+bar	Cupps Produce	Michael Evans	Loren & Margaret Gerber	Indiana Michigan Power
Beth & Dan Anderson	BSC Investments	Michael Damschroder, CFP	Eventbrite	Greenspan Construction, LLC	Insurance Management Service, Inc.
J.C. & Nancy Anderson	Bridgman Area Economic Growth Alliance	Dawson Manufacturing	Far Ahead Advertising, Inc.	Hanson Group	John & Karin Janick
Kenneth Ankli & Ann Miller	Wilson Chandler	The Degroot Family Foundation	Featherstone	Happy Poochie Eatery	JR Walters Resources
Arcadia Gardens, LLC	City of Benton Harbor	Dennis Doucette	Fifth Third Bank	Harbor Shores Golf Course	Kilwins of Saint Joseph
Ausco	City of Saint Joseph	DiMaggio's Pizza	Jeff & Marcia Fettig	Herald Palladium	King Media
B&L Information Systems, Inc.	City Plumbing & Heating	Jeff Dorn	Jim & Ellen Finan	High Top Public Affairs	David & Elaine Kirschenbaum
Perry Ballard	Rob & Susan Cleveland	Ted & Ann Dosch	Flagstar Bank	Holt-Bosse	Kotz Sangster Wysocki P.C.
Beaudoin Electrical Construction, Inc.	Competitive Edge, LLC	Eagle Technologies Group	Christina Frank	Honor Credit Union	Kruggel Lawton CPAs
Benton Charter Township	Consultant Connect	Economic Development Foundation	Frederick S. Upton Foundation	Dan Hopp	Lake Michigan College
	Chris & Katie Cook		Freedom Finishing, Inc.	Salle Huber	Lazy Ballerina Winery
	Tyler Cook		KC & Julie Gast	Huntington Bank	



LeValley Chevrolet Buick GMC	Nature's Way Landscaping	Plante Moran, PLLC	Signature Automotive Group	St. Joseph Today	Rick Villa
Lincoln Charter Township	Thomas Nelson & Prudence Barrett Nelson	PNC Foundation	South Bend International Airport	Starks Family Funeral Home	Villa Environmental Consultants, Inc.
Linear Electric, Inc.	Gayle Olson	Point Blue	Southwest Michigan Chamber	Sturgis Bank	Village of Stevensville
MailMax	Terry & Wanda O'Rourke	Prism Science & Technology, LLC	Southwest Michigan CRA Association	The Hanson Group	Wales and Associates
Bill & Jane Marohn	Oronoko Charter Township	John & Kristy Proos	Southwest Michigan Endodontics	The Inn at Harbor Shores	Whirlpool Corporation
Marzke Family Foundation	PGA of America	Quality Assured Plastics	Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council	Michael Timmers	Whirlpool Foundation
Michigan Municipal League	Pearson Construction Company, Inc.	Ronald & Janice Raade	Special-Lite, Inc.	Michael & Lynn Todman	Whitcomb Retirement Community
Mid-West Family Broadcasting	Peat's Original Cider	Bob & Linda Roberts	Spectrum Lakeland Regional Health Systems	Tyler Automotive Group	David Whitwam
Midwest Glass & Mirror Company	Gladys Peebles-Burks, PhD	Royalton Township	Springthrough Managed Services	United Federal Credit Union	Wightman
Mark & Leslie Miller	Kenley & Carla Penner	Mike & Amy Ryan	St. Joseph Charter Township	Fred & Amey Upton	Wright Properties
Sam & Connie Monte	Pepsi-Cola Company	Gordon & Niki Schreiber		Vail Rubber Works, Inc.	
Pat & Carol Moody	Peter J. Johnson Law Office	SCORE Counselors to America's Small Business		Varnum Attorneys at Law	
		Mark & Kate Seaman		Vickers Engineering, Inc.	



## BERRIEN COUNTY'S LEAD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Since 1988, Cornerstone Alliance has delivered customer-focused economic development solutions through partnerships that grow economic opportunities, increase the tax base, and add to the economic vibrancy of Michigan's Great Southwest. Making it the best place to live, work, and play.



## WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER

Developing and nurturing home-grown business is key to our community's economic future. The professional staff at the Women's Business Center is ready to put your ideas into place to assist in opening your own business or take your existing business to the next level.

Visit [cornerstoneWBC.com](http://cornerstoneWBC.com) to learn more



## FIRST CHOICE PROGRAM

Cornerstone Alliance is proud to serve as a community resource for prospective developers and employers to showcase everything our great area has to offer. If you're considering a move to Berrien County, our First Choice program can match you with local experts to explore our diverse array of communities, find housing, and discover leisure and cultural activities.



## BECOME AN INVESTOR

Each investment in Cornerstone Alliance helps create jobs, attract new business, and expand existing business in Michigan's Great Southwest.



# STAY IN THE KNOW

To keep up with our latest happenings and events, we encourage you to follow us on social media.

[www.GoMichigan.com](http://www.GoMichigan.com)



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