

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Twenty-five years of promoting business practices that demonstrate **environmental stewardship**, **economic vitality**, and **social responsibility**.

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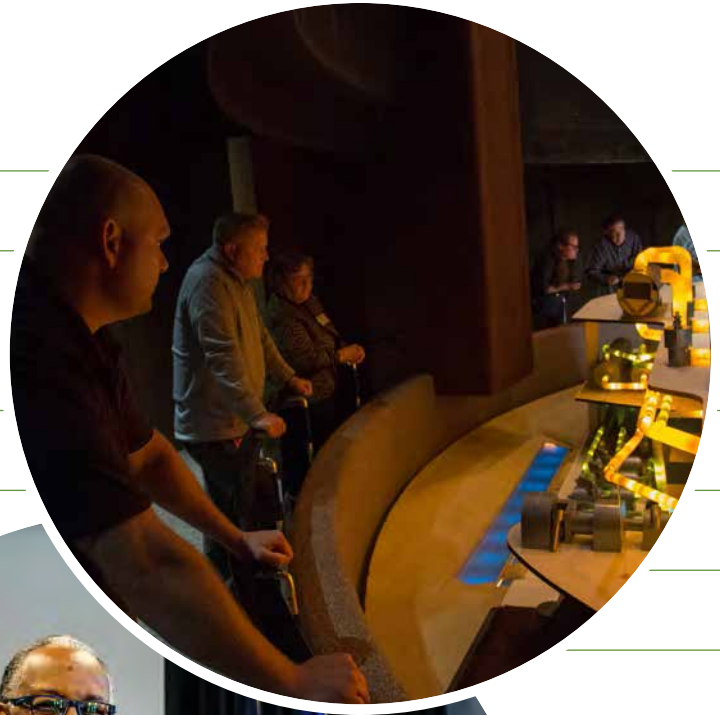
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Dear Friends,

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum. Over the years we have grown exponentially in membership and broadened our focus to encompass all aspects of the Triple Bottom Line – People, Planet, and Prosperity.

Many people think “Sustainability” is exclusive to environmental issues, but to achieve true sustainability, we need to operate at the nexus of the Venn Diagram – that spot where care for the planet, care for employees, and care for communities intersect. WMSBF is working with and supporting businesses and non-profit organizations across a wide spectrum of fields – manufacturing, health care, hospitality, consulting, and environmental and social NGOs, to name a few – to create a space where sustainability can be achieved for all inhabitants of this region.

The past 25 years have seen our focus expand to include Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, while still maintaining a focus on environmental sustainability and what that means to businesses and organizations in Michigan. We have moved from one part-time employee to a team of three full-time employees and interns, extending our influence as we train the next generation of sustainability leaders. Our reach has expanded from our roots in the Grand Rapids metro area to include all of West Michigan from Indiana to the Straits of Mackinac, with consistent requests for support from across the state.

What will the next 25 years bring? The Board of Directors and I are excited to see what the future holds. And we look forward to the Forum being part of both the vanguard and the mainstay in this work to make West Michigan a more sustainable place.

Sincerely,

Sara Meyer
WMSBF Board President
Environmental Resources Management



2019 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Wendy Ogilvie

Grand Valley Metro Council

West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum has selected Wendy Ogilvie as its 2019 President's Award winner, which was presented at its Annual Meeting on June 17. The President's Award recognizes a professional for their contributions to the organization's growth and development. Wendy has served as the Director of Environmental Programs for Grand Valley Metro Council since 2013.

BOARD & STAFF

BOARD & STAFF



STANDING LEFT TO RIGHT:

Allmon Forrester | John Ball Zoo
PRESIDENT Sara Meyer | Environmental Resources Management
EQUITY OFFICER Erik Daly | Miller Johnson
SECRETARY Paul Isley | Grand Valley State University
 Hector Angus
 Anna Keehn | Wightman & Associates, Inc.
 Devan Dodge | Michigan Department of Environment,
 Great Lakes, and Energy
 Dennis McKee | Consumers Energy
 Lynn Spurr | Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber
TREASURER Bill Morgan | Morgan & Morgan CPAs

SEATED LEFT TO RIGHT:

Nicholas Farr | Kroon & Mitchell
VICE PRESIDENT Sarah Chartier | Spectrum Health
 Maureen Stroud | Shinka Sustainability Consultants
 Raul Hernandez Guzman | Aquinas College
EQUITY PROGRAM MANAGER Carissa Patrone | WMSBF
 Jane Feenstra | Gordon Food Service
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Daniel Schoonmaker | WMSBF

NOT PICTURED:

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT Steve Ramus | Perrigo
 Erik Petrovskis | Meijer
 Jeffrey Byrd | Grand Rapids Community College



West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum is a regional collaboration of businesses, government, non-profits and academia dedicated to promoting business practices that demonstrate environmental stewardship, economic vitality and social responsibility.

We are the leading organization for practitioners of beyond-compliance sustainability practices in the Midwest, promoting positive community change and operational improvements through education, collaboration and

resource development. Now with twenty-five years under our belt, we at WMSBF are better able than ever to meet emerging needs by leveraging the efforts of an increasingly robust community of vendors and educational initiatives.

A QUARTER-CENTURY OF SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

With the rise of the modern environmental movement in the second half of the 20th century, the nation began to take notice of the negative impact of certain business practices on the natural environment and human health. Regulations followed. Adjustments in practices, systems and equipment to comply with these new regulations were often costly. This caused some to react with animosity towards the movement.

Others were more pragmatic, becoming proactive, even principled. They knew that aiming beyond compliance toward more sustainable business practices could limit the risk of future regulations and also provide economic value back to the organization.

In West Michigan, a select group was taking it further, experiencing personal revelations about the role of business in environmental and social concerns. Emboldened by a culture that prioritizes natural resources and the wellbeing of employees and community, pockets of forward-thinking groups emerged locally, including a small coalition of businesses that formed the charter membership of West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum.



They put competitive differences aside to pursue common goals. All of their work centered on a common idea: This forum should help organizations balance their impacts on people, planet and profit (the triple bottom line). Members would focus on environmental concerns, but also on the impact their businesses were having on their communities and society.

Informal knowledge sharing produced countless environmental and social outcomes for the region, quietly facilitating local industries' adoption of sustainability. Work groups were formed to attack key issue areas, most prevalently the lack of a general entry

tool for sustainable business understanding. There was no literature for sustainable industry and no best practices, so the forum created its own.

As WMSBF began to develop its programming and efforts, its impact was felt through West Michigan's industrial cultures, especially in the fields of sustainable design and green building. The region's sustainability claims and green bona fides are well known. The forum deserves credit for making it acceptable, even mainstream, for local businesses and government to pursue such efforts.

Of course, the flagship West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum program

has always been our monthly meetings and annual conferences. In our 25 years, the forum has offered approximately 360 professional development events. These events have educated thousands on best practices, emerging issues, and innovative thinking and brought in a who's who of national-scale experts, including local talent and global names. The number of yearly events has risen to 25 across three markets.

The forum has served—and continues to serve—many different roles. There are the speakers and the knowledge. The working group projects. For some

it is a networking venue, a means to meet peers, vendors or potential clients. But ultimately, the most significant value of the forum through its 25 years has likely been its ability to bring together disparate interests from business, government, education and the non-profit world. Today we work to serve as a “boundary organization” able to create and sustain meaningful and mutually beneficial links between diverse communities of experience and expertise, facilitating the flow of knowledge, personnel and resources to encourage collaboration and co-creation.

We at WMSBF look forward to continuing that work for the next quarter-century—and beyond!



2019 FEATURED SPEAKERS

- | | |
|--|--|
| Kristi Artz
Spectrum Health | Adam London
Kent County Department of Health |
| Steve Barnard
Muskegon County Wastewater Management System | Jason Meyer
Blandford Nature Center |
| Justin Beene
Grand Rapids Center for Community Transformation | Lynn Mulder
PADNOS |
| Kate Binder
Bell's Brewery | Janine Oberstadt
Creative Dining Services |
| Rosalynn Bliss
City of Grand Rapids | Erik Petrovskis
Meijer |
| Don Carpenter
Drummond Carpenter PLLC | Patti Poppe
Consumers Energy |
| Sarah Chartier
Spectrum Health | Elliott Rader
The Gluten Free Bar |
| Michael Donnelly
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel | Carrie Rivette
City of Grand Rapids |
| Joseph Engel
The Land Conservancy of West Michigan | Brock Rodgers
Foresight |
| Ann Erhardt
Commons Logic | Eric Saigeon
Intertek |
| Ashley Fahey
Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company | Paul Smith
Kent County Department of Public Works |
| Matt Flechter
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy | Nichole Steele
Experience Grand Rapids |
| Heidi Frasure
Steelcase | Matthew Van Sweden
Catalyst Partners |
| Kyle French
Merrill Lynch | Carrie Veldman
Barfly Ventures |
| Eric Foster
Progress Strategies+ | Brian Vu
City of Grand Rapids |
| Beth Gibbons
American Society of Adaptation Professionals | Kristen Wieland
Kent County Department of Public Works |
| Danielle Glaser
LinkedIn | Kelly Wilczak
Mercy Health |
| Jim Kozminski
Haworth | Guy Williams
Detroitters Working for Environmental Justice |
| | Kevin Vos
Spectrum Health |



The Midwest's Premiere Regional Sustainable Business Education and Networking Program

We pride ourselves on consistent participation from a majority of the region's most recognizable brands, largest employers and most innovative entrepreneurs, advocates and educators.

The modern forum still serves as a mechanism for professional development, networking and tribe-building for practitioners and organizations, but we are becoming more and more a platform for investments in shared capacity to address organizational, industry and community sustainability concerns. We are strategically focused on corporate social responsibility, the creation of a local circular economy, promoting climate leadership, and the growth of green stormwater infrastructure.



FORUM HOSTS

- | | |
|---|--|
| Frederik Meijer Gardens | Grand Rapids Public Library |
| Grand Valley State University Seidman College of Business | John Ball Zoo |
| Kent County Waste to Energy | The Rapid |
| Grand Rapids Water Resource Recovery Facility | LINC Up |
| Fifth Third Ballpark | DeVos Place |
| Davenport University | Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University |

Top photo: The Forum works hard to introduce our members to new and challenging ideas. Ashley Fahey of Goodyear Tire joined us this spring to speak on her experience transitioning to a new sustainability market and gender.

Bottom photo: WMSBF hosts the Michigan Green Team Summit each spring.



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We aspire to be the region’s leader in corporate social responsibility education, resources and networking, ensuring that the third leg of the triple bottom line is represented in sustainability discussions and that sustainability has a role in advancing social issues.

We recognize the potential for our strategic objectives to positively impact racial and economic inequities in West Michigan, while also promoting a greater level of civic engagement and community involvement among our stakeholders and making sustainable business more accessible to all audiences.

The Equitable Sustainability Project

The Equitable Sustainability Project—the result of support from the Wege Foundation—is an acceleration of the forum’s growing commitment to corporate social responsibility and social equity.

The program is specifically intended to make sustainable business relevant and accessible to all audiences, improve diversity of sustainable business, and promote a justice-centered model for sustainable business that would prioritize environmental justice, climate vulnerability, food systems, wellness, employee stewardship and civic engagement.

We are working hard to create new connections and invite any interested parties to join us in our work!

- A lead grant from the Wege Foundation enabled us to create the new equity manager position. We welcomed Carissa Patrone into that role.
- The forum hosted a presentation discussing sustainability in the tire industry and, separately, the transgender experience.
- We now have a certified Spanish interpreter on staff and have been leveraging that capability frequently, including through a half dozen Spanish-languages presentations and trainings this past year.
- We provided support and expertise on environmental sustainability to the Grand Rapids Environmental Justice Report and the West Michigan Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Talleres Empresariales, among others, and on diversity and inclusion to the Michigan Recycling Coalition, Drawdown Michigan, Talent 2025 and Grand Rapids Whitewater, among others.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum continues to be the region’s leading organization for commercial recycling and circular economy dialogue. Two years ago, we quantified the economic potential of recycling through our Michigan Municipal Solid Waste Characterization and Valuation Study, and have since worked aggressively to bring much-needed education and resources to the business community.

- We worked toward our Imagine Trash Partner Program goal with key engagements at Meijer Gardens and Fifth Third Park. We’ve now helped 53 organizations divert over 1,000 tons of waste!
- We continued the Western Michigan Food Recovery Council program and launched a new Event Recycling Working Group.
- In August, we collaborated with the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan to support sustainability at the 2019 Hispanic Festival. Twenty-seven WMSBF volunteers supported sustainable materials management at the festival while enjoying the Hispanic community’s rich heritage, live entertainment, dancing, food and beverages. Our volunteers, through recycling education and conversations about waste management, helped us to achieve an estimated 35% diversion rate!

Photo top to bottom: WMSBF board member Nick Farr with a WMSBF volunteer during our educational campaign at the Grand Rapids Hispanic Festival. WMSBF tour of the Kent County Waste to Energy facility.



CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

WMSBF is leading the West Michigan business community's response to climate change, working to normalize discussions of climate change in business and organizational settings through educational opportunities, resource development and by highlighting the commitment of local organizations to address climate change.

For six years we have been working with climate scientists to provide resources for local organizations interested in the risks climate change presents to prosperity in our region and action strategies to mitigate or adapt to those risks.

We host two working groups, one each on Climate Leadership and Climate Adaptation. The climate leadership group is working to increase the number of member organizations with climate leadership goals such as 100% renewable energy or science-based targets. We now host a clearinghouse documenting these goals and accomplishments among our members and aggregating resources for their use.



STORMWATER

WMSBF is working to promote the advancement of private sector investments in green stormwater infrastructure in the West Michigan area. In collaboration with American Rivers and other partners, we now host a Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) working group, have written a dozen case studies, and are working to educate local businesses on how GSI can help protect their watershed.

To inform our work, we have conducted a survey of local organizations to better understand the level of awareness and current perceptions of stormwater management best practices, nature-based solutions and applicable regulations in the Greater Grand Rapids area. Check out the results on our website.

Photo top to bottom: Discussion on climate resiliency at The Rapid.

Members Catalyst Partners and Plaster Creek Stewards collaborating on rain garden education and maintenance

WMSBF is the region's premier resource for peer-to-peer education and networking.



Regional Satellites

In addition to our flagship sustainability forums in the Greater Grand Rapids area, we are growing our footprint through regional satellites.

The St. Joseph-based Michigan’s Great Southwest Sustainable Business Forum (MGSSBF) was founded in 2010 as a vehicle to provide sustainability education for the business community of Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties. With 80 members, an active board and monthly events, it has grown to become the second-largest sustainability membership organization in Michigan. Together, the two organizations are now functioning as an integrated forum serving 220 members in a contiguous area from Muskegon to Michiana.

The success of the MGSSBF program led us to explore unmet needs in other local markets, including Muskegon County, where we now host a bi-monthly event program and working groups serving Lakeshore professionals and businesses, partially funded by the Community Foundation of Muskegon County.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE



Visit the West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum to learn more: wmsbf.org

Photo left to right: This year WMSBF launched the Muskegon Sustainability Forums, a series of tours and forums on the Lakeshore.

A local solar energy project from WMSBF member Solar Winds Power Systems.

\$\$\$ FINANCIAL REPORT

In 2019, WMSBF continues to be a good steward of its resources and the investment of its members and partners.

	2019	2018	2017
REVENUE	\$195,377	\$198,583	\$147,236
EXPENSE	\$185,785	\$183,754	\$129,980
NET INCOME	\$9,591	\$14,829	\$17,256

HALL OF FAME

A lifetime achievement award, the Sustainable Business Hall of Fame recognizes extraordinary contributions to sustainable business growth in West Michigan over the course of a career.

2019 INDUCTEE



Keith Winn
Catalyst Partners

On the ground floor of the green building movement, Keith Winn was a founding member of the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) and has remained active on various committees there over the years. Winn explains how, in the '90s, the USGBC connected conversations happening about green building from across geographies and sectors to develop the LEED standards that inspire a comprehensive platform for the design of sustainable buildings today. During his tenure at Herman Miller, Inc., Winn served on the Environmental Quality Action Team and chaired the Design for the Environment and Green Building Teams. As Herman Miller and Steelcase became champions for sustainability, other Grand Rapids industries, educational institutions, and philanthropists took notice. By the time Mayor George Heartwell asked Winn

to serve as an advisor to the city's new Environmental Advisory Council, the stage was set for Grand Rapids' designation as 2006 LEED Capital for the United States.

In 2002, Winn founded his own company, Catalyst Partners. Catalyst Partners help clients develop a comprehensive approach that considers healthy building factors like location (walkability and proximity to transit), health-conscious and renewable materials, indoor air quality and outdoor green spaces and landscape.

Winn concludes, "I just do the work that I'm passionate about. I've been able to do that work because of many generous people who have instructed me, informed me and enabled me. They opened the doors and helped me along the way."

FUTURE HALL OF FAME AWARD



Alice Jasper
Local First

In her work for Local First's Good for Michigan program, Alice Jasper oversees the metrics that benchmark social and environment impact while curating

opportunities to help businesses improve the people and planet pillars of their triple bottom lines.

In addition, WGVU has recruited her, along with a small cohort of community leaders of color, for "Shaping Narratives," a project influencing public narratives affecting people of color. "My project focuses on the barriers and the opportunities to diversify outdoor recreation and environmental advocacy," Jasper says. "I want to use this platform to create a sense of belonging and joyful solidarity among people of color in the outdoors."

Before joining Local First, Jasper worked with the YMCA Veggie Van, a mobile

farmers' market increasing food access in food insecure neighborhoods, and the Gilmore Collection, where she helped improve sustainability practices. In 2017, she moved on to the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance, where she developed workshops, programs and consulting strategies that supported racial equity and inclusion in businesses and organizations.

"When we talk about people, planet and profit, the people part tends to get undervalued or looked over too often," Jasper says. "A business can't be sustainable if the community it exists within is not thriving, has not been invested in. It has to have social capital."

PAST HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

2018 Norman Christopher
GVSU

2018 Matthew VanSweden
Catalyst Partners

2017 Becky Kliss
Green Connection

2017 Mark LaCroix
Natural Capital Partners

2016 Guy Bazzani
Bazzani, Local First

2016 Gayle DeBruyn
Kendall College of Art
& Design

2016 Deb Steketee
Aquinas College

2015 Tom Newhouse
Thomas J. Newhouse
Design

2015 David Rinard
Steelcase

2015 Rich Vander Veen
Mackinaw Power

2015 Renae Hesselink
Nichols

2014 George Heartwell
City of Grand Rapids

2014 Fred Keller
Cascade Engineering

2014 Paul Murray
Herman Miller

2014 Bill Stough
Sustainable Research Group

FINALISTS

Chosen by a vote of the WMSBF membership, the Sustainable Business of the Year honors the local company that best represents the values of the triple bottom line. Finalists are nominated by a committee comprised of past recipients and former WMSBF board presidents.

WEST MICHIGAN CIRCULAR ECONOMY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Public Thread is being recognized for its efforts to capture textile waste material for use in the local manufacture of high-quality products, produced by a diverse workforce making a living wage.



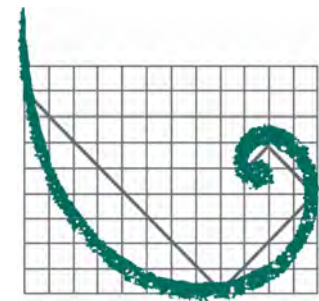
WEST MICHIGAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Valley City Electronic Recycling has been a leader in electronic recycling for 40 years as well as a model for corporate social responsibility. It has employed over 50 returning citizens in Grand Rapids and is working on campaigns to help educate other businesses on inclusive hiring strategies.



WEST MICHIGAN CLIMATE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Environmental Resources Management is among only a handful of companies to have set a science-based target for GHG emissions, including a 2025 goal to reduce direct emissions by 30% and indirect emissions by 11%. These ambitious targets will be achieved by actions such as renewable energy at office locations and reducing business travel and employee commuting. Local ERM staff are active advocates for climate action.



ERM

WEST MICHIGAN CLEAN WATER AWARD

Frederik Meijer Gardens invested heavily in green stormwater infrastructure as part of its \$115 million expansion, including a recently completed 22,000-square-foot rooftop garden that provides intentional and intensive water control.



FREDERIK MEIJER
Gardens & Sculpture Park

GLUTEN FREE BAR
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WEST MICHIGAN TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE LEADERSHIP AWARD

From the beginning, **The Gluten Free Bar (GFB)** wanted to create a company that “did the right thing.” Initially, that meant paying team members a living wage and recycling what it could. As The GFB has evolved into a Triple Bottom Line company and Certified B Corp, goals shifted to People, Planet and Profit, with running a profitable business being only part of its success.

GFB has achieved a 90% waste diversion rate; donated more than 20,000 bars to hunger-relief organizations; and pays employees at least 20% more than the area’s average living wage. More than 40% of its current production team were formerly incarcerated.

WEST MICHIGAN MINORITY-OWNED SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS AWARD

Jim Roberts Enterprises LLC is one of our region’s most impactful advocates for increased diversity and inclusion across all professions, especially financial services, where only 6 to 8 percent of all financial advisers in the country are people of color. Through a sister company, it has promoted sustainable development and green property management for more than 20 years.



PAST WINNERS

2017



2016



2015



2018 Sustainable Business of the Year
 Catalyst Partners

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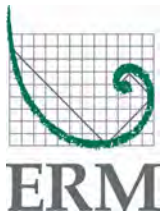
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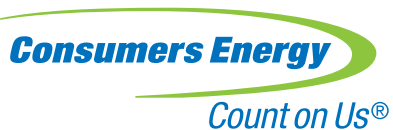
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ERM is in the business of sustainability, and we are very pleased to support WMSBF and their leadership in the West Michigan community.



Visit: www.erm.com

For more information contact:

Sara Meyer

+1 (616) 738-7356

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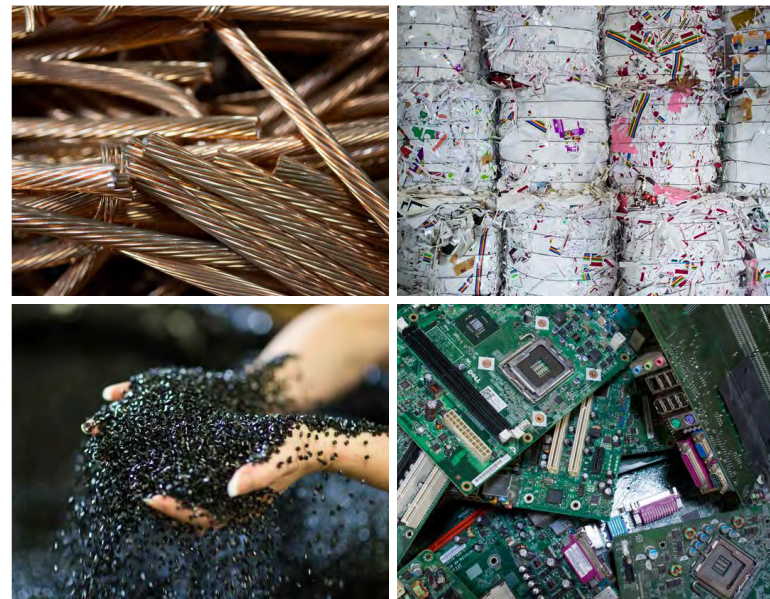
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Interested in joining us to promote sustainability practices in West Michigan and beyond?

Regular WMSBF monthly membership meetings occur on the second Monday of most months, with additional conferences, workshops, tours and mixers scheduled throughout the year in West and Southwest Michigan. We invite you to join one of our working groups: Equity & Sustainability, Solid Waste Task Force, Food Recovery Council, Climate Leadership Roundtable, Climate Adaptation Council, Event Recycling and Plant-Based Menus.

You can learn more about our work and resources, how to become a member and opportunities to get involved at: www.wmsbf.org!

Find info on Michigan's Great Southwest Sustainable Business Forum, and a full membership directory, at mgssbf.org





**West Michigan Sustainable
Business Forum provides
education, resources and
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