



EASTERN LEADERS GROUP

2011 Annual Report

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The Eastern Leaders Group is a partnership between Eastern Michigan University and civic and private sector leaders who are collaborating to meet the **immediate and long-term economic and quality of life needs** of Eastern Washtenaw County.

Letter from the Co-Chairs

It's been another stellar year for the Eastern Leaders Group.

From our Annual Spring Summit featuring Regional Economic Partnerships and collaborative Secondary School Options to our ongoing Microloan, Commercial Redevelopment and Gap Financing Programs, we're continuing to see positive and lasting changes in Eastern Washtenaw County.

Over the past three years, our programs have leveraged over \$5,000,000 in federal, state, local and private funding, created 344 jobs and retained 176 jobs. Thanks to our WISD and school district partners, we now have five secondary option schools offering our students technology-infused and skills-based learning experiences and the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. Thanks to the City of Ypsilanti, the Ypsilanti DDA, and property owners, we have a revitalized West Cross Street through streetscape improvements and the redevelopment of 5 commercial properties along this corridor. And, our microloan and gap financing programs have assisted the expansion of 13 local companies.

Our focus in 2012 will be to continue our business incubator, microloan and gap financing programs and our support for the success of our secondary option schools. We will also initiate three new programs:

- **A Student Design Incubator** to provide design services to incubator tenants and startup companies, and to provide community college students with work experience and entrepreneurial training;
- **A LiveYpsi Program** to incentivize EMU faculty and staff to purchase homes in the area and become engaged members of our community; and
- **A Retail Incubator Program** to assist new businesses with rent and business training and to fill vacant storefronts adding to the vitality of downtown areas.

Our success has been, and continues to be, dependent on our local partners. We are fortunate to have the resources of Washtenaw County and the support of our municipalities, universities, school districts, economic organizations, private businesses, and a host of local non-profits and secondary education stakeholders.

We look forward to another great year of collaborating to meet the immediate and long-term economic and quality of life needs of Eastern Washtenaw County. Thanks for your part in making these priorities a reality!



Leigh Greden

Leigh Greden
Co-Chair, Eastern Leaders Group
Executive Director,
Gov't & Community Relations
Eastern Michigan University



Robert Tetens

Robert Tetens
Co-Chair, Eastern Leaders Group
Director, Parks & Recreation
Washtenaw County

Commercial Building Re-Use

- \$60,000 in County and DDA funding provided grants to W. Cross Street building owners to bring vacant and underutilized buildings up to code and to attract new tenants.
- Applications are now being accepted for a 3rd round of grants totaling \$45,000.

Program Outcomes:

- 5 local businesses awarded grants totaling \$60,000
- \$657,000 in private capital investments
- \$26,000 in increased annual tax revenue
- 27 new permanent jobs created
- 39 construction jobs created



SPARK Eastern County Microloans

- \$264,000 in County ELG Funding provided working capital in early stages of company development.

Program Outcomes:

- 5 local businesses awarded microloans
- 27 new jobs created
- \$39,000 repaid in 2011
- \$150,000 anticipated repayment in 2012



CEED Microloans

- \$65,000 in County ELG Funding used as loan loss reserve fund to leverage \$433,500 in federal SBA loan funding.
- The current level of loan loss reserve funding will allow CEED to provide an additional \$239,500 in loans through 2012.

Program Outcomes:

- \$194,000 in microloans awarded
- 7 local businesses received microloans
- 211 new jobs created
- 176 jobs retained



SPARK East

- Established in 2009 and operated by SPARK, this incubator provides reduced rent and business development services to start up companies.

Program Outcomes:

- Received \$1.8 million in funding from federal, state, local, foundation, private, and higher education sources, including continued state operating funds thanks to the efforts of GCSI.
- Served 26 physical tenants and 14 virtual tenants since opening
- 33.5 jobs currently associated with SPARK East tenant businesses



Manufacturing Gap Financing

- \$35,000 in County Funding for no interest loans to new and expanding manufacturing companies.

Program Outcomes:

- 2 contracts offered, 1 contract executed
- \$35,000 in funds obligated
- 7 new jobs created



Washtenaw County Secondary Options Program

In addition to traditional high schools, a variety of tuition-free secondary options are offered under the leadership of the Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD). These options enjoy the support of local school districts.



Early College Alliance – Public, early/middle college program located on the campus of Eastern Michigan University; provides students with the opportunity to graduate with up to 60 college credits.

Washtenaw International High School (WiHi) – Consortium school based on the International Baccalaureate model; provides a demanding curriculum leading to a high school diploma that is accepted internationally.

Ypsilanti New Tech High – Technology-centered school of the Ypsilanti School District, focused on project-based learning to connect students with local businesses.

Widening Advancement for Youth (WAY) – Year-round online program focused on credit recovery; offers a flexible curriculum and one-on-one mentoring for students who are at risk of not graduating with their cohort.

Program Outcomes:

- Over 1,100 Eastern County students are enrolled in these secondary school options (from the Lincoln, Willow Run, and Ypsilanti school districts).
- Combined, these secondary options have leveraged \$840,000 in foundation and state funding.
- 84% graduation rate at Early College Alliance (students also receive up to 60 hours of college credit)
- Graduation rates for other programs will be tracked in 2014-2015, when first cohorts graduate from other programs.

Special Thanks to Our Partners!

West Cross Streetscape Improvements

The City of Ypsilanti received a \$770,000 MDOT grant to complete the West Cross Street streetscape project in the Summer of 2011. In partnership with the DDA, this pedestrian-oriented project installed street trees, lighting, stamped concrete, crosswalks, and the city's first LED lighting.

Parkview Apartments/Hamilton Crossing

The Ypsilanti Housing Commission received \$6.2 million in state and federal funding to redevelop 74 existing units and build 70 new rental housing units. They are working with Chesapeake Community Advisors, in a phased plan through 2012.



Campus Wayfinding

EMU allocated \$200,000 for a wayfinding system to graphically illustrate the four districts of campus (North, Mid, South and West). It also gives direction for locating campus buildings and nearby commercial areas and interstates. Completed in the summer of 2011, the project was designed to complement the City/DDA's West Cross Streetscape improvements.

Education Support

The Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Regional Chamber promoted our Eastern Washtenaw County educational achievements through press releases and its Exemplary Education Endeavor Awards to Lincoln, Ypsilanti and Willow Run Districts.

Youth Mentorships & Support

Through connections made by involvement in the Eastern Leaders Group in 2011, Cooley Law School's Ann Arbor campus student body reached out to Ypsilanti High School with a wide array of mentorships and positive opportunities for students in need. Engagement ranges from homework help and a developing resource network, to homeless youth outreach and tax prep assistance.

Eastside Community Funding

Thanks to the help of GCSI, Ypsilanti Township, Ypsilanti City, the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, Eastern Michigan University, and Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Commission received more than \$1 million in state funding for the Lakeside Park Development, the Rutherford Pool, and the US-12 Pedestrian Underpass.

EASTERN LEADERS GROUP *2012 Priorities*

Student Design Incubator

- This “incubator within an incubator” located at SPARK East will provide space, equipment and business acceleration services to WCC student entrepreneurs to gain work experience and assistance with starting their own businesses; and provide low cost design services to SPARK incubator tenants, startup and turnaround companies.

Partners:

Eastern Leaders Group – financial assistance with equipment
Ann Arbor SPARK – space, BA services and contracts with incubator and startup clients
Washtenaw Community College – student oversight and product quality control

High School Alternatives and Graduation Rates

- Continue to support the “secondary school” options in eastern Washtenaw County by providing marketing, business planning, equipment and other resources as needed.

Partners:

Washtenaw Intermediate School District – staff resources and funding
Eastern Leaders Group – continued support

LiveYpsi Pilot Program

- This program is intended to stimulate the revitalization of the Ypsilanti area by encouraging full time faculty and staff at Eastern Michigan University to purchase homes by offering a forgivable loan toward the purchase of their primary residence.

Partners:

Eastern Leaders Group – financial assistance
Eastern Michigan University – financial assistance and program administration

Retail Incubator Pilot Program

- This program is designed to attract new and sustainable retail businesses in the downtown area. Program components include: 1-3 year rent subsidies which decline each year; requirements that the business owners receive business planning and meet performance measures; and requirements regarding maintaining regular business hours on weekdays and weekends.

Partners:

Eastern Leaders Group – financial assistance
SBTDC – business mentoring

EASTERN LEADERS GROUP *Leadership*

Leigh Greden, EMU/ELG Co-Chair

Robert Tetens, Washtenaw County /ELG Co-Chair

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Diane Keller, Ann Arbor/Ypsi Regional Chamber
Fred Eaton, Comcast
Jann Joseph, EMU College of Education
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Kirk Profit, GCSI
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ELG Staff – Washtenaw County

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