

ACCESS NETWORK













IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025

ABOUT US

OUR PURPOSE

- Ensure equitable access to comprehensive services aimed at assisting all students in completing postsecondary education, but especially first-generation, low-income, and students of historically marginalized populations.
- Build a culture that encourages completion of career preparation or college education.
- Increase success of both traditional and nontraditional students through lowering barriers.

OUR VALUES

- Postsecondary education is the attainment of education beyond high school, including postsecondary certificates and academic degrees.
- Postsecondary education is a necessity: Postsecondary attainment dramatically increases an individual's economic independence in a knowledge-based economy.
- Postsecondary education is for everyone: We work toward changing the systems that perpetuate inequities in postsecondary attainment.
- Postsecondary education is a public good: Postsecondary attainment is critical to a
 just and equitable society, strong economy, thriving democracy, and healthy
 community.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Define, use, and communicate a common language that honors and empowers all
 postsecondary learners and elevates all postsecondary pathways with our crosssector partners, learners, and throughout our community to address bias and reduce
 communication barriers.
- Meet learners where they are (literally and figuratively) by reducing barriers that help them explore individualized, comprehensive postsecondary pathways and tangible career opportunities.
- Ensure that learners and potential employers are aligned in expectations of needed skills and career-readiness via experiential learning opportunities and other existing resources.
- Grow a robust, aligned, energized participant membership with a learner-first mentality.



The Midland Area Career & College Access Network is an initiative of the Midland Area Community Foundation.

MESSAGE FROM KRISTIN

Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the day-to-day and systemic challenges we've encountered this year, I can't help but be moved and inspired by each of you for making the magic happen in our learners' lives. I'm proud of the continued impact we collectively have in the lives of Midland Area learners in the face of adversity.

From the intensive work of our Career & College Advisers alongside high school staff members and high school seniors to the life-changing interventions of our higher education and nonprofit providers that improve adult learners' situations, you all continue to show up. You all continue to serve. You all continue to move the needle in postsecondary access & attainment for our Midland Area learners, transforming individuals' lives and our community.

This year's impact report highlights many collaborative, systemic efforts and resulting stories of impact, all moved by our initiative, Midland Area Career & College Access Network. And our initiative is moved by each of you. You give expertise, time, and care to develop relationships, share resources, and forge partnerships, all in the name of equipping learners with every opportunity for growth. You mentor, teach, and coach our learners to ensure they are not left behind and develop the confidence and belief in themselves to pursue their dreams.

This is the recipe for making the magic happen. This is the recipe for transforming lives and our community. And you are the magic-makers.

I'm profoundly grateful for your commitment to our shared values—that postsecondary education is for all, a necessity, and a public good. I'm profoundly grateful that you honor these values through your participation in the Career and College Access Network. Thank you for your dedication to building up our learners, preparing them for postsecondary success, and supporting them through postsecondary completion.

Looking forward to our continued impact in 2025-2026,

Kristuak Voin

Kristin Koski Sovis, Ph.D.

Postsecondary Education Leader Midland Area Community Foundation



CAREER & COLLEGE ADVISING PROGRAM

Career & College Advisers serve caseloads of high-priority students at all Midland County high schools and help build a career and college-going culture within school communities. Advisers develop 1:1 relationships with students and their families in helping students explore postsecondary options, make individualized postsecondary plans, and complete postsecondary preparation tasks. In addition to serving students on their caseloads, Advisers serve entire senior classes through coordinating and facilitating Application Days, Decision Days, financial aid literacy events, and other postsecondary exploration activities.













940+ MIDLAND COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SERVED BY OUR ADVISERS





Sarah Elgamal H.H. Dow High School



Jordyn Landon Bullock Creek High School



Lori Pritchard Midland High School



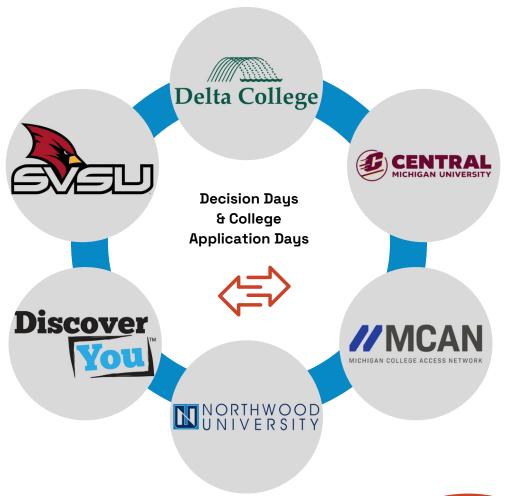
Evan White Academic & Career Education Academy & Windover High School



Skylyr Zink Coleman Jr./Sr. High & Meridian Early College High School

COLLEGE APPLICATION & DECISION DAYS

Career & College Advisers impact their school communities through relationships with community partners, leveraging collective knowledge, strengths, and programming to serve students and families. Advisers rely on the collective impact partnerships that the Career & College Access Network cultivates. These partnerships help bring College Application Days and Decision Days, along with a variety of other literacy and culture-building activities, to students and families.



"Through the efforts and assistance provided by the Midland Area Career & College Access Network, students have made significant strides toward achieving their post-secondary goals. The Network serves as an important resource within our community, facilitating connections for students and offering a wealth of opportunities. These include opportunities to learn about various educational pathways, such as colleges, trade schools, apprenticeships, and military careers. By empowering students with knowledge and resources, the Network plays a crucial role in guiding them, removing barriers, and providing opportunities."

-Jenn Holcomb-Brown Counselor, Bullock Creek High School



PATHWAYS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Regular Career and College Access Network action team meetings and leadership meetings spark impactful collaborations and outreach in our community. This year, Jeff Temple, Program Director at Open Door of Midland, presented to the Learner Team about Open programming and learner needs. Julie Huatt, Director of Adult Literacy at The Legacy Center for Community Success, connected with Jeff and Open Door following this meeting. Julie and Legacy Center colleague, Kay Rogers, Director of Math Programs, began volunteering at Open Door and building relationships with quests. This led to Julie and Kay working alongside Open Door quests as they completed various literacy certifications that The Legacy Center offers. Shortly after this partnership was established, The Legacy Center forged similar partnerships with Ten16 Recovery Network and Shelterhouse.





Today, all 3 locations offer the same programming for the adults of Midland County. To date, the Legacy Center has served 65 learners across these locations in obtaining nationallu recognized certifications in digital literacy skills ranging from beginning Internet to essential software Basics including proficient use of Word and Excel. To date, adult learners have earned 121 recognized certificates of nationally mastery for these digital literacy skills. When learners complete their certifications, the Legacy Center team connects them to other Career and College Access Network partner organizations that meet their can needs. This includes postsecondary organizations such as MichiganWorks! that help learners prepare job materials, enroll in job training, and secure employment.

COLEMAN POSTSECONDARY HUB

The Coleman Postsecondary Hub: reducing education barriers for all and helping to build a career and college-going culture in Coleman.

The Coleman Postsecondary Hub is located in the Coleman Family Center and is open to all Family Center guests. It's designed to show all quests, from pre-kindergarten learners to adult learners, that career advancement & college completion are important and accessible. The Hub brings together several organizations—Education & Training Connection, Michigan Works, The Legacy Center for Student Success, Mid Michigan College, Delta College, Saginaw Valley State University, and Northwood University-to hold important conversations about postsecondary pathways with Coleman residents. Because of these organizations' commitment to advising at the Hub, over 12 Coleman residents have enrolled in college, a workforce training or career advancement program, or a literacy program. Many more residents have had fruitful conversations with Advisers and shared postsecondary information with their family members and friends.









NETWORK FACES

"The Career and College Access Network has helped our students at ACEA [Academic and Career Education Academy] realize there are a lot of options out there for them in life after high school. The students at ACEA have already experienced struggles and frustration in their educational careers and are attending ACEA for that last chance at achieving their goals in life. Without the support of the Career and College Access Network, these students would not be aware of the multitude of opportunities and possibilities that exist for them. The Network provides another layer of support to students to help them succeed in life."

-Steve Newkirk
Principal, Academic and Career Education Academy





"The Career and College Access Network provides both Saginaw Valley State University and me with a community of educators and community members who foster collaboration and networking, all united by the shared goal of ensuring student success in their learning communities—regardless of age and ability."

-Teresa George Director of Career Services, Saginaw Valley State University

"We've known for a long time that access to continuing education and post-secondary training is critical for someone to be able to have a long and fruitful career in healthcare. Yet even knowing this, there are still many barriers that prevent people from becoming lifelong learners. The Career and College Access Network is working hard to remove those barriers, addressing both practical concerns like transportation and the cost of applications, while also working to create opportunities and build access so that everyone, regardless of their background or economic situation, can have the same opportunities to engage quality post-secondary education and training, leading them to successful careers that also enable them to give back to their community, thus building new opportunities for future generations!"

-Jason Graves Associate Director of Provider Contracting MyMichigan Health





"The Career and College Access Network not only brings together those of us working in higher education, but it also provides a platform to present opportunities to learners from all backgrounds. It's incredibly valuable to have a network of professionals in our community who connect learners with the resources and support they need to reach the finish line—and beyond—on their journey to a successful life with greater opportunities."

-Kelsi Osmond, Admissions Representative, Northwood University

"The Career and College Access Network has had an immeasurable impact on our outreach efforts to assist students transitioning from K-12 to college. By centralizing communications and coordinating community resources, the Network has helped us reach a bigger audience and provide supports like FAFSA completion workshops more effectively.

Having this wealth of information and experience, so readily available to tap into, is advantageous to the professionals in our area as well as the students and families they serve. Kristin's leadership and ability to get the right people at the table has been critical to so many initiatives being successfully launched and implemented, such as the Coleman Post Secondary Hub, that otherwise may have stalled in the planning and designing phase. I value what this organization has done for not only my institution, but the community we serve."



-Marcie Carter Manager of Downtown Midland Center Delta College



"One of the most important influences in my journey has been my adviser. They saw potential in me when I didn't always see it in myself. They introduced me to opportunities I didn't know existed—college visits, scholarship applications, career events—and walked with me through every step of figuring out what I wanted to do after high school. Their support wasn't just academic; it was personal. They took time to listen, to understand my goals, and to remind me that I was capable of achieving them.

As I look ahead, I'm excited to be attending Central Michigan University, where I plan to study Communicative Sciences and Disorders with a minor in American Sign Language. My goal is to eventually become a Pediatric Speech-Language Pathologist, not just because I want a successful career but because I want to make a positive impact in my community. I've seen firsthand how access to support and encouragement can change the direction of someone's life. I want to be that person for someone else one day."

Olivia Fisher
 Bullock Creek High School Graduate (2025)

SUMMER SUCCESS PROGRAM

Midland County Summer Success Program served 17 learners in its pilot throughout Summer 2024. Summer Success Coaches worked 1:1 with recently graduated seniors and their families to ensure strong starts to their postsecondary education journeys that began in Fall 2024. This program seeks to combat the "Summer Melt" phenomenon, which learners of all populations, especially vulnerable populations, experience when the structures and supports of the school year are suddenly gone upon graduation. This year, the program is expanding its capacity. Forty recent high school graduates and their families will be served throughout the Summer of 2025.

Participating learners will have 1:1 access to their Success Coach, receive weekly reminders and check-ins regarding completing their postsecondary preparation tasks, and have individualized support that ensures their success starts with their postsecondary education in the Fall. These supports vary per learner needs, and can include: completing their new student orientations, registering for classes, meeting with advisers to map out plans of study, meeting with counselors, securing disability services, securing housing, making transportation plans, understanding promissory letters and financial aid, and securing other wraparound support services.



HOW?

The Midland Area Career and College Access Network functions as a collective impact model: participants from cross-sector organizations come together regularly to share resources, lend expertise, and collaborate on projects and programs that reduce barriers for learners. Most of the work happens thanks to the collective, collegial mindset that the Network's participants bring to the table. To cover expenses for employing Career & College Advisers at our 7 Midland County high schools and sustain impact projects (such as equipping the Coleman Postsecondary Hub with technology for learners), the Network relies on a partner-cost share model, relying on participating organizations and the generous support of our community. To support this initiative, please scan the QR code on the back cover or visit midlandfdn.org today.

2024-2025 In-Kind Contributors:

Academic & Career Education Center

Adoption Option Inc.

Bullock Creek Schools Coleman Area Library

Octomer Business Asset

Coleman Business Association

Coleman Community Schools

County of Midland

Delta College

Disability Network Mid-Michigan

Discover You, The ROCK Center for Youth Development

Education & Training Connection

Grace A. Dow Memorial Library

Girl Scouts Heart of Midland

Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works!

Greater Midland Community Centers, Inc.

Greater Midland Coleman Community Center

Meridian Public Schools

Mid Michigan College

Midland Area Community Foundation

Midland Business Alliance

Midland County Department of Health and Human Services

Midland County Educational Services Agency

Midland I-Park CAP Steering Team

Midland's Open Door

Midland Public Schools

MyMichigan Health

Northwood University

Saginaw Valley State University

Shelterhouse

Ten'16 Recovery Network

The Legacy Center for Community Success

United Way of Midland County

West Midland Family Center

Windover High School

2024-2025 Financial Contributors:

Academic & Career Education Center

Adoption Option Inc.

Bullock Creek Schools

Charles J. Strosacker Foundation

Coleman Community Schools

Delta College

Greater Midland Community Centers, Inc.

Meridian Public Schools

Michigan College Access Network

Midland Area Community Foundation

Midland County Educational Services Agency

Midland Public Schools

MyMichigan Health

Northwood University

Saginaw Valley State University

The Legacy Center for Community Success

United Way of Midland County

West Midland Family Center

Windover High School





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midlandfdn.org/initiative/ccan/





