

# What happens when compassion for the community meets Pure Michigan **OPPORTUNITY?**

Community Ventures (CV) is an innovative new economic development initiative that promotes employment and social enterprise in the state's most economically distressed urban areas.

## Why Michigan?

Michigan's new CV initiative empowers talent and creates safer and more vibrant communities.

Success is based on:

- Working with start-ups, expansions and incubated growth
- DNA of innovation and reinvention
- "Matchmaking" expertise connecting businesses with opportunities
- Regional partnerships and business support networks

## Community Ventures provides opportunities

Coordinated by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), this initiative helps structurally unemployed individuals pursue career opportunities at Michigan companies in Detroit, Flint, Saginaw and Pontiac. Any Michigan company can participate if willing to hire talent from these urban communities and provide long-term, full-time employment. An MEDC representative will meet with participating employers and work with local talent partners including Michigan Works!, Mott Community College, Goodwill and others to match an eligible employee with appropriate employer.

Since its launch in October 2012, CV has recruited more than 200 companies who have placed 3,000 participants into employment.

# 3,000

*Over 3,000 participants have been placed into full-time, long-term employment.*

## How Community Ventures achieves its goal

- Talent development grants: For risk mitigation and to drive employment performance. Companies are free to use grant funds for business development, talent development, etc.
- Wrap-around services: Assist with job retention and removal of barriers to employment (e.g., job coaching, transportation, etc.)
- Career pathways: Employer-tailored career support for CV participants (e.g., literacy support, GED, certification, training, etc.)
- Business supports: Services and supports for businesses and social enterprises to improve employee engagement and productivity

## Business leader impressed

Detroit Chassis, which makes chassis for recreational vehicles, is seeing tremendous growth and is hiring more employees. Wanting to help the community, the company turned to Community Ventures and hired dozens of workers who were considered structurally unemployed. To date, Detroit Chassis has hired more than 200 CV-eligible employees through Community Ventures.

Detroit Chassis CEO Michael Guthrie said Community Ventures allows his company to hire individuals who might not otherwise be considered for employment. "I'm in the business of deploying capital, assuming the risk, in the pursuit of a return," Guthrie said. "It's easy for many of us to screen out all the risk. And, in doing so, what we do is exclude a significant number of people from any prospect of employment within our companies. We knew we could try to screen everybody and accept the lowest risk employees or we could remain true to our vision and build community wealth by hiring people from the community and taking them as they were and working with them," he said. "Community Ventures helps minimize the risk by doing the pre-assessment, screening, hiring, training and employability skills and by providing the extraordinary support while our new recruits are transitioning into full employment."

To learn more about Community Ventures, please visit [mitalent.org/cv](http://mitalent.org/cv). If you are a business interested in participating in the Community Ventures program, please contact a regional project coordinator.

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