

Living  Learning  
Enrichment Center

# 2024 *Gratitude* REPORT

Celebrating Our Community's Generosity and Impact



## A Message of *Gratitude*



**Rachelle Vartanian**

Founder and President  
Living and Learning  
Enrichment Center



**Pam Travis**

Executive Director  
Living and Learning  
Enrichment Center

Dear Friends,

What an extraordinary year 2024 has been for the Living and Learning Enrichment Center! As I reflect on our journey together, my heart overflows with gratitude for your unwavering support and partnership.

This year, we've reached new heights in our mission to empower individuals with different abilities. Our vocational programs flourished with the addition of 26 new job coaches, expanding our reach to 135 community-based partner sites across 30 cities. We celebrated over 60 job placements, each one representing a life transformed through meaningful work and purpose.

Our artistic endeavors blossomed at MOD Market, where member-made products contributed 15% of total sales. The ribbon-cutting at our satellite soap and candle studio in Canton marked a wonderful milestone in providing creative outlets for our talented members. And who could forget our Annual Variety Show, where 438 attendees—nearly double last year's turnout—witnessed the incredible talents of our performers!

The Living and Learning campus came alive with activity as we launched our new BLOOM initiative, turning wildflower seeds into beautiful bouquets sold at our farmstand. Our renovated kitchen now hosts popular cooking classes, further enhancing our life-skills programming.

None of this would be possible without your generosity. Our Annual Hopes & Dreams Gala welcomed over 700 guests and sponsors! We secured over \$3.2 million in donations and \$450,000 in grants, established our first endowment fund, and provided \$3,500 in program scholarships to ensure our services remain accessible to all.

I'm deeply honored that Governor Whitmer appointed me to the Michigan Autism Council this year, recognizing our organization's leadership in advancing support services. This appointment will allow us to shape autism services statewide while positioning Living and Learning as a leader in this field.

As we look toward 2025, we remain committed to creating a world where everyone, regardless of ability, can live, learn, and thrive.

With heartfelt gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachelle Vartanian".

Rachelle Vartanian  
Founder and President  
Living and Learning Enrichment Center



Dear Friends,

As I reflect on the past year, I'm struck not just by the milestones we've reached, but by the moments—the small, meaningful victories that remind us why we do this work.

In art classes, I watched a once-hesitant participant begin to advocate for himself through clay. In our vocational program, I witnessed a group of young adults navigate a new job site with confidence and camaraderie. At a weekend hangout, I saw genuine friendships spark over shared laughter and board games. These stories—some quiet, some bold—represent the real heart of Living and Learning.

2024 has been a year of connection, creativity, and courage. Our growth in locations, programming, and staff has allowed us to say “yes” to more individuals and families than ever before. We've deepened our community partnerships, added new opportunities, and launched new spaces where our members feel seen, safe, and celebrated.

Some of the most powerful insights this year came from the voices of our families and members. Their feedback reaffirmed that what we offer goes far beyond programming—it's about building belonging, promoting independence, and restoring hope. It's about creating a place where people of all abilities can thrive on their own terms.

We enter 2025 energized by what's ahead.

Strategic planning is underway to address critical gaps revealed in demographic data collected—like transportation, financial access, and increased parent support—that still hold many back. We are also growing our collaborative efforts with local art nonprofits, businesses, and service providers to create a more inclusive center of opportunity.

Thank you for being part of this story. Your generosity fuels every breakthrough, every step forward, and every life changed. We are so grateful to continue this journey with you.

With appreciation,

*Pamela Travis*

Pam Travis  
Executive Director  
Living and Learning Enrichment Center









# 2024 Highlights

## Key Metrics and Achievements

Welcome to a look back at the transformative journey and milestones reached at the Living and Learning Enrichment Center in 2024. Through teamwork, empathy, and a deep commitment, we've made significant progress in advancing inclusion and enhancing the lives of individuals from diverse backgrounds and needs. Explore the key statistics below that highlight our ongoing dedication to building a world where everyone has the support, acceptance, and opportunities they deserve to thrive.

### Employment & Job Development

26

**new job coaches added**,  
expanding to 135 job partner sites

54

**successful job placements** across  
30 Metro-Detroit cities

40%

**increase** in vocational program  
participation

### Program Growth & Impact

2

Opened **2 new satellite  
hub locations**

87%

**of parents** observed  
positive changes in  
their loved one's  
mental health

86%

**of members** reported  
learning new skills  
through our programs

74%

**of caregivers** reported  
their loved ones were  
excited to wake up  
each day

### Funding & Community Support

Secured over **\$3.2 million**  
in donations including **\$450,000**  
in grants

Established a board-managed  
**endowment fund** and opened  
a second endowment through  
the Community Foundation for  
Southeast Michigan

Provided **\$3,500 in program  
scholarships** to ensure  
service accessibility

### Recognition & Advocacy

**Governor Whitmer appointed**  
Founder Rachelle Vartanian to the  
Michigan Autism Council

Created **sensory-friendly zone**  
for Northville's Annual Holiday  
Lighted Parade

Santa 5K fundraiser experienced  
**234% increase** in donations, with  
nearly **400 runners**

# Finding His Voice:

## Alex's Journey of Growth

When Alex Ham-Kucharski and his family returned to Michigan after living out-of-state, his mother Dawn faced the challenge of building a new support system for her son. After recommendations from friends, they discovered Living and Learning Enrichment Center—a decision that would transform Alex's life.

Shortly after joining, Alex discovered pottery through the art programs—something he'd never seriously explored before. The tactile medium immediately resonated with him, providing a new way to express himself beyond words. "Pottery gave Alex a voice," Dawn explains. "It opened doors to parts of himself he hadn't been able to share before."

His creative journey expanded when he joined the Cooking Club following the center's kitchen renovation. What began as simple meal preparation evolved into newfound independence with budgeting, grocery shopping, and menu planning. Dawn notes the ripple effect of these skills: "His experience with cooking has sparked something deeper—a new sense of empathy and connection with others."

Perhaps most touching is how these changes have transformed family life. Once preferring solitude in his room, Alex now initiates family dinners and outings, keeps track of everyone's schedules, and actively seeks quality time with his parents.

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"Before Living and Learning, Alex rarely wanted to spend extra time with us," Dawn reflects. "Now he's the one bringing us together. He's developing relationships in ways we never imagined possible."

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Looking ahead, Alex dreams of showcasing and selling his pottery through MOD Market or the Village Arts Factory. Though he describes himself as naturally anxious, his growing comfort is evident as he participates in more programs. The progress he's making at Living and Learning continues to build his confidence day by day, expanding his horizons beyond what he once thought possible.













# From Classroom to Creation:

## From Classroom to Creation

When Michael Antonucci's family relocated to Michigan, they brought with them a young software designer with untapped potential. Having studied game design at Savannah College of Arts and Design while interning at an Atlanta software studio, Michael had discovered his preference for practical, hands-on learning over classroom instruction.

New to Michigan, Michael's mother Courtney encountered Living and Learning through a news piece and podcast featuring Rachelle. "Having just moved to Michigan, I had no idea how to get services or support for Michael," Courtney explains, "so I called Living and Learning, and they helped me."

After visiting the campus and meeting with Ethan Erlandson, Living and Learning's Job Development Coordinator, Michael found an unexpected opportunity that would leverage his unique talents in service of others. The team needed someone to develop a simulation "game" to help members practice making appropriate workplace decisions—such as customer-focused choices when stocking shelves in a retail environment.

Michael embraced the challenge enthusiastically. Drawing on his software development skills and incorporating input from the Job Development staff, he created virtual workplace scenarios that members could respond to in real time. "Listening to someone tell you how to do something is not as effective as actually making choices in response to task-related scenarios." He likens it to his experience at his internship versus his time in a college classroom. "Practical education helps you learn much more."

The project has stretched Michael's abilities, requiring him to recognize knowledge gaps and find creative solutions. When asked about the rewards of his work, he highlights "the acknowledgment and appreciation of my work and its ultimate benefit to those who will use the software" as the most significant satisfaction.

For Courtney, watching her son thrive at Living and Learning has been transformative. She likens the staff's impact to a stone thrown into water—creating immediate effects that ripple outward to families and communities. Before connecting with Living and Learning, she felt as though she was "watching your child erode. This bright guy with employable skills was wasting away in my basement."

Now, everything has changed. "The Job Development Department was and continues to be his allies," Courtney shares. "Michael found an environment at Living and Learning that valued him. Seeing Michael get to use his degree in a meaningful way is the opposite experience of the erosion I spoke of earlier."

After experiencing support systems in multiple states, Courtney offers perhaps the highest praise: "We have lived in three different states. I have taught in several others, and I have never seen such a well-run, comprehensive, compassionate environment."

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"Michael found an environment at Living and Learning that valued him. Seeing Michael get to use his degree in a meaningful way is the opposite experience of the erosion I spoke of earlier."

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# Financial Overview

## ASSETS

Cash and Investments	2,152,946
Accounts Receivable	236,770
Pledges Receivable	150,200
Other Assets	108,557
Land, Buildings, & Equipment	4,358,908
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>7,007,381</b>

## LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	348,412
Secured Mortgages & Notes Payable to unrelated third parties	2,650,000
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>2,998,412</b>

## EQUITY

Net Assets without donor restrictions	2,656,511
Net assets with donor restrictions	1,352,458
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>4,008,969</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>7,007,381</b>

## REVENUE

Fundraising Events	283,195
Contributions/Gifts/Grants	2,566,191
Programming	4,170,064
NonCash Contributions	169,264
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>7,188,714</b>

## EXPENSES

Program	4,413,757
Management and General	744,945
Fundraising	334,513
Other	61,863
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>5,555,078</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>1,633,636</b>

Specific program revenue and expense data is available on Living and Learning's 990 form at: [www.livingandlearningcenter.org/about](http://www.livingandlearningcenter.org/about)











# Thank You to Our Donors

## Cumulative Giving as of 12/31/2024\*

### Champion Caregiver (\$1,000,000 to \$10,000,000)

Manat Foundation

### Eternal Heart (\$500,000 to \$999,999)

Moscone Family Foundation  
Diane & David Wallen  
Charitable Fund

### Loving Mentor (\$250,000 – \$499,999)

Masco Corporation  
State of Michigan  
Don & Marilyn Price

### Heartfelt Friend (\$100,000 – \$249,999)

A. A. Van Elslander Foundation  
Brenda Massey  
C. Robert & Sara Maxfield  
Ruth L Shattuck Private  
Foundation  
Smiles for Children

### Empowering Guardian (\$50,000 – \$99,999)

C.Morrison-Donaldson  
Charitable Fund  
The Children's Foundation  
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The Donald and Mary Kosch  
Foundation & Dearborn  
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Ford Motor Company  
Impact100 Oakland County  
Mr. & Mrs. Scott & Marcy Klevorn  
Marcia Brady Tucker Foundation  
The Margaret Dunning Foundation  
Beverly Roskelly

### Supportive Partner (\$24,000 – \$49,999)

Abrams Family Foundation  
Ascension Providence  
Betty & Leo Blazok Foundation

Comerica Bank  
Connectus  
Cooper Standard  
The Denver Foundation  
Loretta Humm  
Flagstar Bank  
Ford Motor Land Development Corp  
The Forte Family Fund  
The Home Depot Foundation  
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PNC Bank  
Pulte Family Charitable Foundation  
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Heather Rindels  
Sergei Fedorov Foundation  
Glenn Shaw Family Foundation  
SATH Solutions  
The Steed Family  
Warren and Beverly Boos  
Charitable Trust  
Wendell and Doris Rogers Foundation

### Compassionate Ally (\$10,000 – \$24,999)

Aisin World Corp of America  
Autism Strong Foundation  
Steven & Mary Jo Bandy  
The Bair Family  
Nimesh Bhavsar  
The Block Foundation  
Fox Motors  
Jeffrey & Lisa Borneman  
Jim & Pat Bosscher  
David & Naomi Brandon  
BrassCraft Manufacturing Company  
Building Bridges Therapy Center  
Lori & John Caretti  
Cinnaire Corporation  
Edward Clark's Hunter Service  
Consumers Energy Foundation  
Therese Marie Cooper  
DTE Energy Foundation  
Kevin Dunivin & Carolyn Moore  
Feldman Auto Group  
First Presbyterian Church  
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The Hodess Family Fund  
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Jag Trading LLC  
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John E Green Company  
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Christy Landrigan  
Lindow Family Fund  
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M Architects  
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Paula & Marks Angel Fund  
Pinnacle Facility Solutions  
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Pulte Homes of Michigan  
Ralph Wilson Foundation  
Raymond James Charitable  
Real Estate One Charitable Foundation  
Rehmann Robson LLC  
Robert & Joan Dircks Foundation  
Robert Bosch, LLC  
Marion & Jerry Rozum  
SAY Detroit Play Center  
Secure Planning Strategies  
Eric & Diane Smith  
Julie & Dave Spivey  
USA Hockey Arena

### Community Advocate (\$1,000 – \$9,999)

360 Risk Management, Inc  
A-1 Valet  
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Lisa & Gary Abundis  
Accurate Construction Services, LLC  
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Daniel & Lucy Adamcheck  
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 Bob's Sanitization - Scottie's Potties  
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 Christina & Jim Castellano  
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 Community Financial Credit  
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 Joe Fedeli  
 Frances Firek  
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 Heather O'Brien  
 Karen Obsniuk  
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 of Victory Council #14427  
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 Vincent Pangle  
 Faith Passalacqua



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 Plymouth Scholars  
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 Dave Pompa  
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 Debra Power  
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 Alexander & Juliana Promo  
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 Sonia & Patrick Qatsha  
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 Studio 170  
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 Success Mortgage  
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 Sun Outdoors/Sun Communities  
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 The Giving Hope Women's  
 Giving Circle Fund of The  
 Canton Community Foundation  
 The D.S. Blair Charitable Fund  
 Ronald & Gabrielle Thomas

Three Talents Bridge Academy  
 Thrivent  
 Tim Hortons  
 Tipping Point Theatre  
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 Renee Tomina  
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 Claire Tryon  
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 World of Wonder Travel LLC  
 WWK Investments, LLC  
 Beth Yee  
 Carol Young

Anonymous Donors – thank you for  
 your generous support

*\*We apologize for any errors  
 or omission in this listing.  
 Please reach out to us with  
 any corrections.*

# Champions of Possibility:

## How Don and Marilyn Price Support Independence



Marilyn and Don Price have been donors to the Living and Learning Enrichment Center since 2019. Their connection to Living and Learning started when Marilyn was on the Northville City Council and heard a presentation at a Council meeting. Soon after, she attended a Northville Rotary meeting on Living and Learning and learned even more. She and her husband, Don, were impressed and saw that Living and Learning would need support to reach its goals, including the development of the new campus on the former Don Massey estate.

When they wanted to learn more about Living and Learning, they arranged to meet with Rachelle Vartanian, Living and Learning's Founder and President. After meeting Rachelle, Marilyn and Don were very impressed by her vision for Living and Learning and her passion for its mission. Marilyn commented, "The work Rachelle does is so impactful. It's about enriching lives."

Marilyn served multiple terms on both the Northville School Board and the Northville City Council. Don is a retired engineer, and they are long-time Northville residents. Don serves on Living and Learning's Advisory Committee, helping provide insight and guidance to the development of our programs and to Living and Learning as a whole. The committee also assists in outreach activities to help create a broader public awareness of Living and Learning.

Members of Living and Learning's Loving Mentor Society, Marilyn and Don made significant donations in support of the renovation of the Carriage House on campus, and in support of the Maxfield Challenge which is committed to supporting the growth of the Voc Plus program and the expansion of Clinical Services.

For their 2024 donation to the Challenge, Marilyn and Don utilized a Qualified Charitable Distribution of funds from an IRA they hold. Don read about this giving option and was intrigued by its tax benefits and the ability to use the distribution to fulfill the Required Minimum Distribution from their IRA.

Marilyn and Don believe strongly in the work Living and Learning is doing to help those with different abilities move toward living as independently as possible. Their giving is motivated by their commitment to the difference Living and Learning is making in the lives of its members and has roots in their personal knowledge of the powerful difference meaningful work and fellowship has had for a family member who is part of that broad community. They strongly encourage others to get to know the organization and join them as supporters of such a worthy cause.





# Thank You 2024 Donor Honor Roll\*

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Manat Foundation

## \$100,000 to \$249,999

A. A. Van Elslander Foundation

Don & Marilyn Price

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## \$25,000 to \$49,999

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# Thank You 2024 Event Sponsors



## 2024 Gala

Manat Foundation  
Lineage Logistics  
Masco  
Linda A. Wilke Charity  
The Donald & Mary Kosch  
Foundation & Dearborn  
Sausage  
Sergei Fedorov Foundation  
Marcy & Scott Klevorn  
Magna  
Aisin World Corp of America  
Diane and Tom Busard  
Allen Park Kiwanis  
Garco Gaskets  
Feldman Automotive  
Fox Motors  
Rajput-Dasgupta Family  
Charitable Foundation  
Secure Planning Strategies  
Julie and Dave Spivey  
Moscone Family Foundation  
Shari and Jim Vlasic  
Steed Family  
Bidigare Contractors  
Exchange Bar & Grill  
Kelly & Kelly, P.C.  
Metro Cars  
PNC Bank  
Tom & Pam McLean  
Victoria & Bob Genord  
Community Opportunity Center  
Independent Living Alliance  
ITC Holdings  
DigiTek  
Official Driving School  
Three Talents Bridge Academy  
360 Risk Management  
Ajeless  
Bill Brown Ford  
Building Bridges  
Chick-fil-A Twelve Oaks  
Children & Family Solutions Center  
Continental  
Clark Hill  
Hunter Pasteur Homes

Independent Carpet One  
Linden Neuropsychological  
Services  
Mark Warfield  
McCaskill Family Services  
Schoolcraft College  
TD Auto Finance, a division  
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Doeren Mayhew  
Loyalty Insurance  
DWIHN  
Doug & Cheryl Welday  
Mans Lumber  
Edward Korkoian Funeral Home  
WWK Investments  
Derek & Christina Bair  
David & Diane Wallen  
Eric Smith  
Karen Obsniuk  
Deni and Diane Pejanovic  
Patty Mullen Group  
Mike Miller Building Company  
Real Estate One  
Ron Hodess  
Brighton Florist  
Alphagraphics

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## 2024 Fall Formal

Imagine Design & Build  
Brighton Florist  
Lekker Choco Treats  
Party Pix

## 2024 Santa Run 5k

Absopure  
Papa Johns  
Wagners Cleaning Service  
TDMK2  
Sign & Art  
Gazelle Sports Northville  
Kate DeCavitte  
Running Lab Brighton  
Northville Fitness

## 2024 Talent Show

Brighton Florist  
Preservation Dental  
International Minute Press  
Eric Smith  
Peggy Sturtevant

## 2024 Hockey Hearts & Heroes Event

Fox Motors  
Feldman Automotive Group  
Flynn & Company  
Official Driving School  
Plante Moran  
Sussman Marketing Service  
Ajax Paving  
Bidigare Contractors  
Detroit Red Wings Foundation  
DTE Vantage/DTE Energy Trading  
GH Pastor Foundation  
Glenn Shaw Family Foundation  
Edward Clark's Hunter Service  
Mans Lumber  
Michigan Educational Credit Union

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Construction  
Antonelli Agency  
Antonio's Cucina Italiana  
Beirut Bakery  
Boars Head  
Holiday Market of Canton  
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Lamar Advertising of Detroit  
Renegade Staging  
Blue Star Service Dogs  
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# 2024 Job Sites

248 Garage  
 ABC Warehouse Farmington Hills  
 Applebee's Grill and Bar (Canton)  
 Applebee's Grill and Bar (Commerce)  
 Applebee's Grill and Bar (Westland)  
 Aramark Refreshments (Livonia)  
 Aramark Refreshments (Plymouth)  
 Arctic Edge of Canton  
 Art and Jakes Sportsbar and Grill (Northville)  
 BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse  
 Bluestone Children's Center  
 BMW (Fox Motors Group)  
 Buddy's Pizza (Novi)  
 Buffalo Wild Wings (Novi)  
 Building Beds 4 Kids  
 Burlington (Farmington Hills)  
 Burlington (Novi)  
 Burn Boot Camp  
 Busch's Fresh Foods Market (Plymouth)  
 Busch's Fresh Foods Market (Canton)  
 Summit on the Park (Canton)  
 Cattails Golf Club  
 Center Street Grille  
 Chick-Fil-A (Northville)  
 Chick-Fil-A (Novi)  
 Chubb E Acres  
 City of Northville / Mill Race  
 City of Westland  
 Community Opportunity Center  
 Continental Cafes (Bosch, Farmington Hills)  
 Continental Cafes (Bosch, Plymouth)  
 Continental Refresh  
 Country Inn & Suites (Novi)  
 Courtyard by Marriot (Courtyard Detroit Livonia)  
 Craft Brew City  
 Crispelli's Bakery and Pizzeria  
 Deadwood Bar & Grill  
 DSW Designer Shoe Warehouse (Novi)  
 DSW Designer Shoe Warehouse (Canton)

Edo Ramen  
 Farmington Hills Inn  
 First United Methodist Church (Northville)  
 Fleece and Thank You  
 Food Gatherers  
 Fresh Thyme Market (Canton)  
 Fresh Thyme Market (Northville)  
 Fresh Thyme Market (Ypsilanti)  
 Friends of the Garden City Historical Museum  
 Friendship Circle  
 Gateway Farms  
 Great Lakes Ace (2 locations in Livonia)  
 Great White Buffalo Brewing Co.  
 Hampton Inn (Northville)  
 Henry Ford Health (West Bloomfield)  
 Henry Ford Providence  
 High Velocity Sports  
 Hilltop Golf Course  
 Hilton Garden Inn (Plymouth)  
 Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites (Farmington)  
 Home2 Suites by Hilton (Northville)  
 HopCat (Livonia)  
 Hospitality House  
 Hyatt Place (Novi)  
 Independence Village of Plymouth  
 The Inn at St. Johns (Saint John's Resort)  
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 MANS Lumber  
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 Marriott Ypsilanti at Eagle Crest  
 Meadowbrook Country Club  
 Meadowbrook Congregational Church  
 Meijer (Commerce)  
 Meijer (Livonia)  
 Meijer (Northville)  
 Mercedes Benz Financial Services  
 Michigan Humane Society (Westland)  
 Mike Modano Ice Arena  
 New Hope Center  
 Northville District Library  
 Northville Swim Club  
 Novi Ice Arena  
 NuStep  
 Oakland County Foster Closet  
 Orchard Lake Country Club  
 Papa John's (Northville)  
 Papa John's (South Lyon)  
 Picnic Basket Marketplace  
 Posh Consignment Boutique  
 Red Dot Coffee Co.  
 The Salvation Army USA  
 Savvy Sliders  
 Sheraton Hotels (Detroit – Novi)  
 St. Edith Catholic Church  
 St. Kenneth Catholic Church  
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 World Medical Relief







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