



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022

Geauga Growth Partnership's mission is to enhance the economic climate in Geauga County by attracting new business, supporting existing businesses, and preparing the workforce of the future.

***"Thank you to everyone who worked with our team throughout 2022 to innovate and make new opportunities become a reality."***

Greetings,

2022 was an incredible year of growth for Geauga Growth Partnership (GGP) in many ways - programs, membership, and staffing. First, the organization realized exponential growth in the Workforce Development Programs due to companies, such as Great Lakes Cheese, desiring to provide consistent learning opportunities for all employees across their business footprint. Virtual platforms created opportunities to provide trainings in eight states in 2022! The Youth Career Awareness and Readiness programs saw the expansion of services through the release of GGPYouthWorkforce.com in September of 2022. This website allows GGP to serve teachers and students in new and innovative ways. Membership grew to new levels, bolstering the organization to nearly 200 members! And finally, our Board of Directors recognized the need to expand our professional staff, for the organization to continue its growth while meeting the needs of the business community.

Certainly, this growth would not happen without the partnerships, commitments and investments from the local schools, business and nonprofit communities, and certainly, YOU, our valued and trusted members.



As you review this report, you will note a new logo and look on behalf of Geauga Growth Partnership, Inc. Our intent with this change is twofold. We want to reflect the trajectory of growth GGP has achieved, while also simplifying the logo to create a more modern, clean look that still embodies our core values and mission. GGP continues to be streamlined and forward-thinking, focused on continual improvement, with a new logo that also represents this effort. Our colors, blue and green, will remain the same. This is because when utilized together, they represent balance and growth, as well as three of our priority core values of stability, trust, and loyalty. Thank you to Ten10 Design for helping GGP through this process and providing guidance towards a positive result.

We look forward to an even stronger 2023!  
Sincerely,  
John Epprecht

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**John Epprecht, Chairman**  
Great Lakes Cheese



**John Steigerwald, Vice Chairman**  
At Large



**Stephanie Ronyak, Treasurer**  
The Arms Trucking Co.



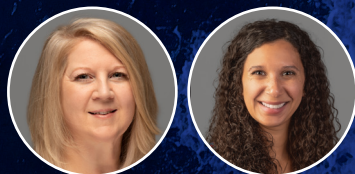
**Richard Frenchie, Secretary**  
The Frenchie Group



**Beth Bunton**, Troy Chemical Industries  
**David Ford**, The Federal Improvement Co.  
**Jay Giles**, At Large



**Jason Glowczewski**, UH Geauga Medical Center  
**Lee Imhof**, Retired, Troy Chemical Industries  
**Christian Klein**, Company 119  
**Bridey Matheney**, Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan  
**Paul Miller** (not pictured), Honest Scales Recycling  
**Renee Nied**, First Energy Corporation  
**Matthew Nipper**, KeyBank N.A.



**Diane Popovich**, Solon Manufacturing  
**Tracie Roberts**, Montville Plastics & Rubber  
**John Solich**, Middlefield Banking Company  
**Angela Spalsbury**, Kent State University Geauga  
**Bonnie Troyer**, HR Strategies & Solutions  
**Casey Zulantz**, Ten10 Design LLC



Sincere appreciation for outgoing  
Board Members: (not pictured)

- **Cliff Babcock**, Junction Auto Family
- **Tony Madormo**, Best Sand/COVIA
- **Chuck White**, White Management

## STAFF



## STAFF

**Kimm Leininger**, President & CEO  
**Monica Bricker-Thompson**, VP of Operations  
**Kristine Frankenberry**, Director of Development  
**Julie Gorenc**, Director of Engagement  
**Maggie Carpenter**, Youth Workforce Program Manager





# GROW

GGP strives to develop an attractive, strategic location where companies will choose to locate. It is critical to convene economic development organizations as well as research partners to organize efforts that encourage economic growth in Geauga County.

*"Our partnership with the GGP assists in the development of sustainability and growth for our Village through innovation, resource connection, and workforce development."*

Leslie Gambosi-McCoy,  
Village of Middlefield Administrator

**"GGP DOES AN AMAZING JOB AT BEING A COMPLETE RESOURCE FOR THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND WORKS TIRELESSLY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS."**

Gina Hofstetter,  
Gauga County Community  
& Economic Development

## GROW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### GGP Board Members

Renee Nied  
Committee Chair  
David Ford  
Richard Frenchie  
Paul Miller  
Tracie Roberts

### Committee Volunteers

Leslie McCoy, Village of Middlefield  
Steve Yaney, City of Chardon  
Angela Zurbuch, US Bank

## EVENTS TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES

47

Business Retention  
and Expansion visits



76

Referrals Made



### Where Are The Workers Roundtable:

In partnership with TeamNEO, GGP held a roundtable discussion to explore information from a regional study, Where are the Workers, an initiative of the Fund for Our Economic Future. Nearly 30 businesses joined to share about the real challenges faced by the Geauga County business community.



**Held an Ohio Department of Development Property Remediation Webinar** for townships and businesses to learn more about how to connect with available funding.



Coordinated small businesses to attend roundtables with Governor Mike Dewine and Representative Dave Joyce, offering them the opportunity to share their concerns with elected officials.



### Burning Down the House: How to navigate the Fed's push to extinguish inflation.

Breakfast sponsored by The WealthCare Group of Raymond James and their partners: Casey Hendrickson, Regional Vice President, and Matthew Orton, Chief Marketing Strategist from Carillon Tower Advisors.



Thank you to our partners in economic development.



## ENTREPRENEUR SUCCESS EVENTS



**FEBRUARY**  
Elements  
Fitness Studios

**JUNE**  
National  
Polymer

**OCTOBER**  
Northwoods  
Cabin Co.

**DECEMBER**  
Troy Chemical  
Industries

Chesterland

Bainbridge

Newbury

Burton

## GGP NETWORKING EVENTS

**APRIL**  
Elements  
Fitness  
Studios

**JUNE**  
Sharon James  
Cellars

**OCTOBER**  
Arborwear

**DECEMBER**  
Welshfield Inn,  
GGP Holiday  
Member  
Networking



# 1,704

attendees at 150 GGP  
Programs for Business  
Consulting, Networking, and  
Workforce Development.



# 112

Workforce Training  
Programs Held

Thank you to our  
training and business  
support partners.

**MANUFACTURERS  
SOLUTION, LLC**



**CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES  
AND SOLUTIONS GROUP**



**GEAUGA AND TWINSBURG  
ACADEMIC CENTER**

ENTREPRENEUR SUCCESS  
EVENT SPONSORS



NETWORKING SPONSORS



Geauga Growth Partnership partners with community organizations providing a multitude of educational programs, training, and networking opportunities to support the growth of existing businesses in Geauga County. GGP strives to identify what products, programs, or services would benefit the GGP Membership and establish partnerships to meet those needs; while remaining agile to adapt to future needs.

### CEO PEER ADVISORY GROUP

"After working with the CEO Peer advisory group and with Dave both as a facilitator & individually, what I appreciate most is the groups' ability to focus our attention on core issues.



The collective experience of the group has been invaluable & continues to challenge us on everything from internal to external variables in our business. The group helps us dig in the weeds, but not get lost in them while always reminding us of the big picture. I LOVE the exuberance of this group!"

Lisa Carrelli-Kraus, Owner, Independent Tree

In 2023

# 62%



identify the Availability  
of a Skilled Workforce as  
their top need in order to  
successfully accomplish  
planned investments.

**Top Investments  
Planned in 2023**

1. Training
2. Equipment
3. Building & Plant Facilities
4. Technology Software

## GUIDE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### GGP Board Members

John Steigerwald  
Committee Chair  
Cliff Babcock  
Beth Bunton  
Jay Giles  
Matt Nipper  
John Solich  
Bonnie Troyer

### Committee Volunteers

Michelle Rodewald  
Auburn Career Center  
David Cowen  
Community Volunteer  
Margo Reda  
Ohio Means Jobs Geauga County  
Mandy Vacik  
Ohio Means Jobs Geauga County  
Patty Schenker  
Solon Manufacturing  
Nicole Crews  
Great Lakes Cheese

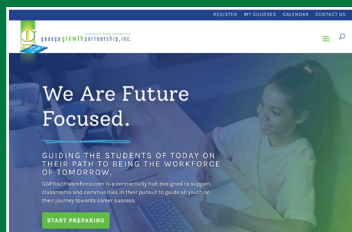
# PREPARE

GGP provides programs to middle school and high school youth to prepare them as our future workforce. Programs include Career Awareness through business tours, Career Readiness through Career Development Workshops, and Career Experience through GGP's Summer Incubator Program. GGP continually enhances these programs based on the needs of local students, school districts & companies. This work supports career readiness regardless of a student's post-high school chosen path: Entrepreneurship, Enrollment, Enlistment, and Employment.



## Launch of GGPYouthWorkforce.com in September 2022

Thank you to the Ohio Department of Education for funding through the RemotEDx Grant which helped GGP to build this website for use by local educators.



Thank you Summer Incubator Program host companies:  
Montville Plastics & Rubber Company 119  
Troy Chemical  
Ohman Family Living at Holly  
Geauga Growth Partnership  
Geauga County Auditor's Office  
MSI, Inc.  
RE/MAX Rising  
Punderson Manor  
UH Geauga  
ASM International  
Advanced IT Professionals, Inc  
His Daughter  
Solon Manufacturing  
Burton Healthcare  
Mercury Plastics

## PREPARE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

### GGP Board Members

Angela Spalsbury  
Committee Chair  
John Epprecht  
Lee Imhof  
Tony Madormo  
Diane Popovich  
John Steigerwald

### Committee Volunteers

Chris Yuhasz  
POV Solution  
Ken Green  
Community Volunteer

## CLEVELAND CAVALIERS CAREER NIGHT

Provided exposure to careers in professional sports to over **100** Geauga County students.



## INCUBATOR PROGRAM



Hours of professional development provided

**16**

Geauga County companies participated



**24**

Youth Program Activities held in 2022 with 1,528 participants!

**18**

Students placed in Incubator Program



**\$1,000**  
in scholarships awarded

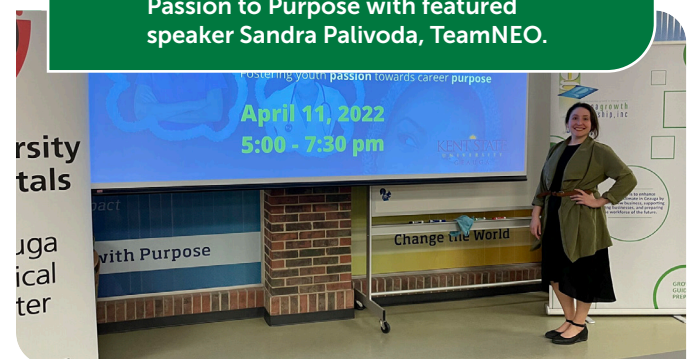
**3**

students continued to work as interns after the Incubator Program ended.



## CAREER EXPLORATION OPEN HOUSE

Passion to Purpose with featured speaker Sandra Palivoda, TeamNEO.



Thank you to our Youth Program Sponsors





## 2023 Excellence in Manufacturing Award

presented in partnership with MAGNET



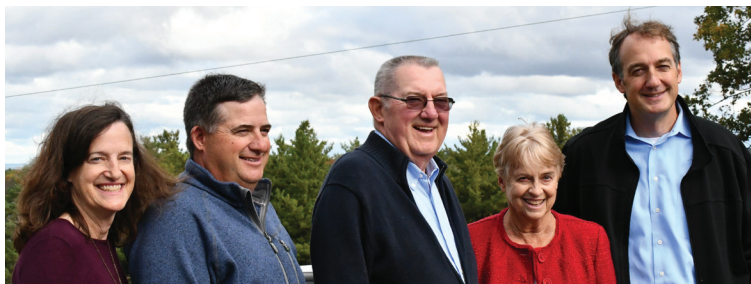
Born in 2011 in a 300 square foot, make shift plastic greenhouse in Kirtland, Great Lakes Growers has evolved into a 160,000 square foot highly automated, hydroponic greenhouse production facility specializing in leafy greens and herbs. After quickly realizing the potential of the business, Great Lakes purchased 20 acres of land in Burton in 2012 and built its first 60,000 sq ft, a high tech greenhouse. The business grew quickly, and in 2015 added another 30,000 square feet and also continued to make investments to further automate its processes. In 2019, Great Lakes Growers expanded an additional 70,000 square feet and added the infrastructure that would allow the company to rapidly expand over the next decade. Great Lakes Growers is preparing to expand an additional 60,000 square feet by winter of 2023.

Great Lakes Growers focuses on the Midwestern marketplace and boasts the nation's broadest product line focused on both retail grocery chains as well as food service distributors.

The company utilizes several interconnected automated processes ranging from water fertilization and sanitation, automated climate and lighting control, automated transport and spacing of the plants as well as automated packaging. As a true innovator in his quest to create the highest quality produce in the most efficient and profitable manner possible, John Bonner continues to make the necessary improvements and investments in automation and people to make that goal become reality.



## 2023 FRANK SAMUEL DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



### MR. JIM PATTERSON

The GGP Board of Directors is honored to recognize Mr. Jim Patterson, as the 2023 recipient of the Frank Samuel Distinguished Service Award. A lifelong Geauga County resident and a graduate of West Geauga High School, Mr. Patterson has dedicated his life to following his agricultural roots and serving as a third-generation farmer of Patterson Fruit Farm. In addition, Mr. Patterson has represented numerous boards, including The Ohio State University, Ohio Produce Growers and Marketers Association, University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center, Geauga Park District, Geauga Growth Partnership, and the Great Geauga County Fair Foundation to name a few. Mr. Patterson has also served our community as a County Commissioner for thirteen years. We wish to thank him for his deep commitment and passion for not only serving our community, but for the leadership and support he has provided to the agricultural industry and business sectors through the years.

### WITH OVER 200 PARTICIPATING MEMBERS, GGP AIMS TO BRING VALUE TO EACH AND EVERY ONE.

"We believe being a member of GGP affords us many benefits. I would say the wealth of information from a very diverse group of local and like-minded businesses would rank among the top reasons. We have also benefitted from many of the different classes, and seminars they do. Hearing stories from other business owners and entrepreneurs, and having a platform to share our own story. All around we feel that being a member of GGP adds value to our company and to us personally."

Keith & Danialle Lynce, Northwoods Cabin Company

"We are members because we believe in supporting the organization that supports the companies in our county, as well as the educational programming for high schoolers."

Jane Neubauer, Sugar Pines Farm

## 2023 ANNUAL MEETING SPONSORS

### Gold Sponsors



### Silver Sponsors



### Bronze Sponsors



### Award Sponsors



## SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION

The GGP Board of Directors established a second **Organizational Fund** held at **The Cleveland Foundation**. The Geauga Growth Partnership Legacy Fund will support the organization, including all programs and activities.

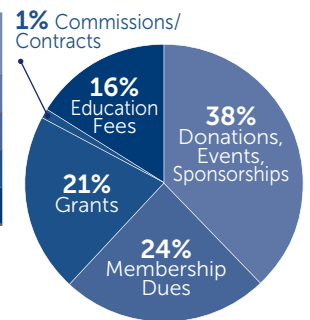


The new **Legacy Fund** compliments the previously established endowment fund serving youth programs, the Geauga Growth Partnership Workforce Development Fund in Honor of Frank Samuel.

Both funds support the long-term sustainability of the organization.  
Fiscal Year 2022 (January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022)

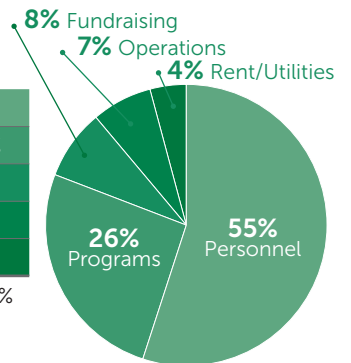
### Revenue

Donations, Events, Sponsorships	\$232,804	38%
Membership Dues	\$143,177	24%
Grants	\$128,080	21%
Commissions/Contracts	\$7,466	1%
Education Fees	\$95,570	16%
	\$607,097	100%



### Expenses

Personnel	\$344,656	55%
Programs	\$163,667	26%
Fundraising	\$49,564	8%
Operations	\$42,169	7%
Rent/Utilities	\$24,045	4%
	\$624,101	100%



## HOMEGROWN GEAUGA AUGUST 4, 2022 • SAPPHIRE CREEK WINERY

Presented by:

### Featured Restaurants



WELSHFIELD INN



Chef Jonathan Bennett

