



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN WOMEN'S COMMISSION
Lansing

CHERYL BERGMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 29, 2024

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
Governor, State of Michigan
State Capitol
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer,

Pursuant to Public Act 1 of 1968, on behalf of the Michigan Women's Commission (MWC), I am pleased to submit to you MWC's Annual Report for the 2023 fiscal year (FY23) of October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023.

Our initiatives were operationalized as follows:

MWC Public Meetings:

The Michigan Women's Commission held two public meetings in FY23:

- 1) October 18, 2022, in Battle Creek. MWC was joined by guest speakers Howard Walters of W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Becca Erskine of Kellogg Company, and Kathleen Moore of Battle Creek Shared Services, the MI Tri-Share Facilitator Hub for Calhoun County. Walters and Erskine discussed the impact of the COVID-19 and how to best support women in the workforce and Kellogg's dedication to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion. Moore reported on the progress of the MI Tri-Share Child Care program in the region.
- 2) April 18, 2023, Grand Rapids. Prior to the public meeting, commissioners volunteered in a mock job interview event held by Disability Advocates of Kent County for local high school students. MWC was joined by John Cauchi of Disability Advocates of Kent County and Chana Edmond-Verley CEO of Vibrant Futures, the MI Tri-Share Facilitator Hub for Kent County. Cauchi discussed disability awareness, inclusion, and equity, as well as general statistics about people with disabilities. Edmond-Verley reported on the progress of the MI Tri-Share Child Care program in the region.

Minutes from the FY23 MWC public meetings can be found online at michigan.gov/mwc.

Primary Programs:

MWC Committees

MWC Commissioners continued to meet and explore opportunities under committees established in the 2020 strategic planning process: Committee on Implicit Bias Awareness, Financial Freedom Committee, Unlocking Opportunities Committee, and Visible Authentic Leadership Committee. More information about the work of these committees can be found online at michigan.gov/mwc.

MI Tri-Share Child Care

The first of its kind in the country, MI Tri-Share Child Care (MI Tri-Share) is an innovative approach to increasing access to high quality, affordable child care for working families, while also helping to retain talent and removing one major barrier to employment. Through MI Tri-Share, the cost of child care is shared equally by an eligible employee, their employer, and the State of Michigan, with coordination being provided regionally by a facilitator hub.

MI Tri-Share was made a permanent ongoing program with the state's FY23 budget. As of September 30, 2023, MI Tri-Share was operating in 59 of Michigan's 83 counties, with 13 facilitator hubs, 145 participating employers, and serving 444 children in 308 families. Per the Governor's office, MWC worked with stakeholders to develop a five-year implementation plan for MI Tri-Share, which we announced in summer 2023. The strategic plan is a guide for growing MI Tri-Share to scale statewide and lays out what the cost and administration of the program will need to look like to be successful.

Additional details about MI Tri-Share are available at michigan.gov/tri-share.

Fostering Access, Rights and Equity

In the Fall of 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau awarded the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) a Fostering Access, Rights and Equity (FARE) Grant to run from September 30, 2021, to March 31, 2023. The purpose of the FARE Grant was to help women workers who earn low wages understand and access eligible benefits and workplace rights.

Housed within LEO, MWC used this FARE Grant to connect over 50,000 Michigan women to: 1) eligible public benefits, such as child care assistance through the Child Development and Care subsidy or MI Tri-Share; 2) pathways for higher-paying jobs, especially through programs like Michigan Reconnect and Registered Apprenticeships; and 3) resources for exercising workplace rights, such as knowing where to turn if they face on-the-job discrimination, wage theft, or workplace safety risks.

MWC also launched a monthly, public-facing, MI FARE Webinar Series to reach women statewide with similar information. Each 30-minute webinar focused on a specific State of Michigan resource and took place live on Zoom, with closed captioning and ASL interpretation. Recordings are available on the MI FARE Webinar Series playlist on MWC's YouTube channel at youtube.com/@miwomenscommission. Each webinar also included a wrap-around social media campaign to share resources, links and additional information related to that month's topic.

The MI FARE project contributed to the State of Michigan's goal of enrolling 40,000 children in Child Development and Care, the state's child care subsidy program.

Additional details about the MI FARE Program and links to resources are available at michigan.gov/fare.

MWC Bipartisan Legislative Women's Council

MWC launched the MWC Bipartisan Legislative Women's Council ("Women's Council") in early 2022 to facilitate greater communication and collaboration between MWC and women elected to the Michigan House of Representatives and the Michigan Senate. The Women's Council updates legislators on MWC's programs and resources to share with their constituents and facilitates collaboration with the MI Legislature to advance economic security and opportunity for all of Michigan's women. In February 2023, you hosted the Women's Council and women legislators at the Governor's Residence for a Galentine's Day reception. There the new quadrant chairs were introduced: State Representative Julie Brixie (D), State Representative Sarah Lightner (R), State Senator Kristen McDonald Rivet (D), and State Senator Michelle Hoitenga (D). The first Women's Council meeting of the new legislative session was held on May 9, 2023.

Appointments to the Commission

No new appointments were made to the commission in FY23.

Biographies for all MWC Commissioners are available online at michigan.gov/mwc/commissioners.

21-Day Racial Equity Challenge

MWC continued to host the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge in FY23. Over 400 Michigan women have completed the challenge since MWC launched the program in 2020. By enrolling in a challenge cohort, participants receive a daily email from MWC for 21 consecutive days. Each email contains a tool or resource to guide participant learning around racial equity. Participants also receive an invitation to participate in three facilitated live online reflection conversations with fellow cohort members. MWC Commissioners host the cohorts, supported by MWC staff.

Additional information about MWC's Learning Cohorts is available online at michigan.gov/mwc/21-day-racial-equity-challenge.

MWC Intern Program:

In FY23, MWC hosted Gabby Sheets as full-time year-long AmeriCorps VISTA and hired three summer student assistants: Rachael Bailey, Olivia Howard, and Modupe Olatunji. In February 2023, Anna Rose Benson replaced Sheets as the new full-time year-long AmeriCorps VISTA.

Social Media:

Find examples of our social media content on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#). In FY23, MWC decided to close its Twitter account because of the low engagement rate. MWC's #MIWomenWednesday video campaign series is available on MWC's YouTube channel in the [#MIWomenWednesday playlist](#).

MWC Events and Speaking Engagements:

Highlights from MWC's FY23 events and speaking engagements include:

October 7, 2022: CEO Cheryl Bergman spoke at the Women's Officials (WON) Foundation Networking Breakfast advocating for women's voices in public spaces.

February 12, 2023: Gov. Gretchen Whitmer hosted a Galentine's Day reception celebrating women leaders in the legislature.

February 28, 2023: CEO Cheryl Bergman and Commissioner Danielle Atkinson spoke at the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau's Advancing Equity in Infrastructure-Funded Jobs panel hosted by Wayne State University.

March 7, 2023: Commissioner Sue Townsel presented to the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) Cancer and Prevention Control Section Health Equity Team.

March 11, 2023: CEO Cheryl Bergman attended the National Association of Women in Construction's Michigan Women & Skilled Trades Summit to welcome guests on behalf of Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

March 15, 2023: CEO Cheryl Bergman welcomed guests on behalf of Gov. Gretchen Whitmer at the National Association of Women Business Owners annual awards breakfast.

March 15, 2023: Commissioners Sabala Mandava and Danielle Atkinson were participants on a women's health panel hosted by the First Lady of Detroit, Dr. Sonia Hassan Duggan.

March 23, 2023: Commissioner Geneva Williams presented on 5 Things Today's Successful Leaders Do hosted by Monroe County Community College for Women's History Month.

March 29, 2023: CEO Cheryl Bergman Moderated a LEO Town Hall for Women's History Month.

March 31, 2023: Commissioner Lisa Cawley spoke at Canton Township's in-person Lunch and Learn for Women's History Month.

April 27, 2023: CSO Shannon Garrett was a panelist for the Michigan's Children Advocacy Summit.

May 4, 2023: MWC collaborated with the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) to produce a webinar about menopause in the workplace for their Mental Health Webinar Series. Visit [LEO's YouTube channel](#) to watch the full webinar: [Mental Health Webinar: Menopause in the Workplace.](#)

May 6, 2023: CSO Shannon Garrett was the keynote speaker at the MI Federation of Business and Professional Women's Annual Convention.

May 10, 2023: MWC collaborated with the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) to produce a webinar about domestic violence in the workplace for their Mental Health Webinar Series. Visit [LEO's YouTube channel](#) to watch the full webinar: [Mental Health Awareness Webinar: Domestic Violence.](#)

May 18, 2023: CEO Cheryl Bergman was a keynote speaker for the Annual Women in Defense conference.

June 20, 2023: CSO Shannon Garrett shared information about MWC and State of Michigan resources for advancing women's leadership and economic security with Traverse Connect.

July 25, 2023: Anna Rose Benson was selected as a host partner for The Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. Benson acted as a resource for the fellows who chose Women and Girls as their community of practice.

August 26, 2023: Gov. Gretchen Whitmer hosted a roundtable with four other governors, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, Maine Governor Janet Mills, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey, and New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, to discuss why women's leadership is vital. The conversation was facilitated by Michigan Women's Commissioners Sabala Mandava and Geneva Williams. Visit MWC's [YouTube channel](#) to watch the full conversation: [Women's Equality Day: Women Governors Roundtable.](#)

September 18, 2023: Commissioner Geneva Williams moderated a panel discussion, Continuing the Conversation: The Maternal Health Crisis in Michigan - Legislative and Policy Solutions, hosted by the First Lady of Detroit, Dr. Sonia Hassan Duggan.

MWC in the News:

MWC's general media coverage for FY23 includes:

[It's Latina Equal Pay Day, and these numbers are shocking](#)

(Op-ed by MWC Commissioner Sabala Mandava & Sonya Hernandez of the Hispanic/Latino Commission of Michigan.)

[Michigan is seeing unprecedented female leadership; that's good for government](#)

[\(Op-ed by Commissioner Geneva Williams.\)](#)

[Expanding civil rights is good for Michigan's economy](#)

(Op-ed by Commissioners Lisa Cawley and Misti Rice.)

[Michigan's recent tax relief will boost women's economic security](#)

[\(Op-ed by Commissioner Sabala Mandava.\)](#)

[Women with disabilities too often left out of workplaces. Businesses must do better.](#)

[\(Op-ed by Commissioner Karin Hopman and Trina Edmondson of Disability Advocates of Kent County.\)](#)

Sincerely,



Cheryl Bergman
CEO, Michigan Women's Commission