

Consumers Energy Foundation Provides \$250,000 to Support Skills Training for Nearly 8,000 Students

JACKSON, Mich., Oct. 21, 2020 – The Consumers Energy Foundation today announced a \$250,000 grant to Youth Solutions to provide skills development to expand its Jobs for Michigan's Graduates' Postsecondary and Career Pathways Accelerator initiative to nearly 8,000 students across the Lower Peninsula.

"Youth Solutions is doing extraordinary work to equip today's students with skills that will power their futures and our state's economy," said Roger Curtis, Consumers Energy's vice president of public affairs. "The Consumers Energy Foundation is thrilled to provide financial resources that will connect even more young people with job opportunities right now."

Youth Solutions' leading program is Jobs for Michigan's Graduates, a state-based affiliate of the nation's Jobs for America's Graduates organization, one of the largest and most successful school-to-work systems for vulnerable young people in the U.S.

Through this initiative, Youth Solutions will help bridge the gap between available jobs and skilled workers by providing post-secondary and career exploration opportunities and success skill development to youth across Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

"Michigan's young people are our future workforce. Thanks to the Consumers Energy Foundation, together we will help youth overcome education and employment barriers in order to identify and pursue their careers of interest, here in our home state," said Kristin Harrington, executive director of Youth Solutions.

Partnerships are key to the long-term success of this initiative, said Stephanie Beckhorn, director of the Office of Employment and Training for the state Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity.

"We have been a long-standing partner of Youth Solutions and their premier program, Jobs for Michigan's Graduates. Together we have worked to create a statewide network of organizations spanning education and workforce development including 13 of the 16 Michigan Works! agencies," Beckhorn said. "This network provides skills and pathways for Michigan's vulnerable youth to succeed in education, employment and, in life."

The \$250,000 grant is one of two awarded by the Consumers Energy Foundation through its first People Awards. Last month, the Foundation announced another [\\$250,000 contribution to Youth Opportunities Unlimited](#) to provide career training for students and young adults in Southwest Michigan.

The People Awards were the third of three \$500,000 grant allocations totaling \$1.5 million. Planet Awards and Prosperity Awards winners were announced in April and late fall 2019.

The Consumers Energy Foundation is the charitable arm of Consumers Energy, Michigan's largest energy provider. In 2019, the Consumers Energy Foundation, Consumers Energy and its employees and retirees contributed more than \$11.5 million to Michigan nonprofits. For more information about the Foundation, visit www.ConsumersEnergy.com/foundation.

Youth Solutions is a premier youth opportunity organization providing pathways to education and employment success for Michigan's vulnerable youth. For more information or to become a partner, visit www.ouryouthsolutions.org.

Consumers Energy, Michigan's largest energy provider, is the principal subsidiary of CMS Energy (NYSE: CMS), providing natural gas and/or electricity to 6.7 million of the state's 10 million residents in all 68 Lower Peninsula counties.

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