



DICKINSON AREA  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
**ALLIANCE**

**SHARED OPPORTUNITIES  
INDIVIDUAL SUCCESSES**

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

# THANK YOU TO THE ALLIANCE INVESTORS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

The Alliance directors and investor partners are invested in the Dickinson County area's innovation, growth and success. The time and talent you provide to our task force committees is greatly appreciated. Together, we will continue working to retain, recruit and grow the economy through business development, education, marketing and advocacy by creating a community that provides a high quality of life.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Tony Edlebeck, Chair**

Retired - City of Kingsford

**Benjamin Wood, Vice Chair**

Range Bank

**Russ Kassin, Secretary/Treasurer**

First National Bank & Trust

**David Holmes**

David Holmes Consulting LLC

**Lee Lofstrom**

Industrial Development Corporation

## DIRECTORS

**Nikki Bowers,**

Systems Control, a Hubbell brand

**Michelle Copley**

CCI Systems, Inc.

**Jon Coyne**

BOSS Snowplow

**Ryan Danielson**

Danielson Insurance Agency

**Christopher Germain**

Lake Superior Community Partnership

**Ryan Gordon**

Stephens Real Estate

**Dr. Nerita Hughes**

Bay College

**Paul Meneghini**

Enbridge

**Nate Raiche**

M.J. Electric

**Trenton Rankin**

Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson

**Dr. Phil Shealey**

VA Medical Center

**Joe Stevens**

Dickinson County

**Steve Verrette**

Champion, Inc.

## ALLIANCE INVESTORS

Thank you for your continued financial support. We look forward to working together, creating shared opportunities and individual successes.

41 Lumber	GEI Consultants, Inc.
ATC	Incredible Bank
Bacco Construction	Industrial Development Corporation
Bay College Iron Mountain	John Fornetti Dental Center
Bellin Health	Kleiman Pump & Well Drilling
Billerud	Loadmaster
Bloom Wholesale	Louisiana Pacific
BOSS Snowplow	Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson
Breitung Township	McCole & Company
Breitung Township Schools	M.J. Electric
Carey Design Build	Mountain Media House
CCI Systems	Niagara Development
Champion Inc.	Northern Interstate Bank
City of Iron Mountain	Norway Eye Care
City of Kingsford	Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center
City of Norway	Print Blvd
CJ Graphics	Range Bank
Circle Power Renewables	RLF Limited LLC
CWRK Collective	Ryan & Lynch Law
Danielson Insurance	Smith Metal Structures
Dickinson Area Community Foundation	Stephens Real Estate
Dickinson County	Systems Control, a Hubbell brand
Dickinson Homes	TDS, Inc./The Drug Store
Enbridge	The Markell Company
First Bank	Tourism Association of Dickinson County
First National Bank & Trust	Trident Maritime Systems
Fleury, Singler & Company	U.S. Special Delivery
Four Seasons Beer Distributors	Werner Electric Supply

## DEAR INVESTORS

This past year started with economic uncertainty as the U.S. economy faced many headwinds, including higher tariffs, inflation, and rising unemployment due to a slowdown in hiring. We also faced high costs with housing and healthcare, as well as general anxiety with the introduction of AI. Despite these key economic pain points, we have seen continued resilience in the Dickinson Area.

Our local industry remains strong, as Dickinson County boasted the lowest unemployment rate at the end of 2025 across the Upper Peninsula. The Dickinson area has also seen many new investments take place across the board, such as the Carlos Cantina restaurant expansion, a new three-unit building that will be anchored by Starbucks, infrastructure improvements, new hangars at Ford Airport, a Brownfield plan that will bring in commercial space and eventually 17 apartment units in Downtown Iron Mountain, among many others.

The Alliance Task Force groups were very active in 2025, hosting meaningful events for Dickinson area businesses, planning and strategizing housing development, and continuing to work on the talent pipeline in collaboration with local schools and industry. We have continued to build upon our relationships with partners throughout the Upper Peninsula and the State of Michigan.

This year, we also worked on building relationships with partners in Florence and Niagara and have extended our advocacy efforts in the State of Wisconsin.

With extraordinary contributions from industry leaders, board members, task force participants, and community volunteers, our organization ended 2025 with great momentum to bring into this next year. We are profoundly grateful to The Alliance investors for continued financial support. We appreciate the expertise, time and value the investors, board of directors, and volunteers bring to our organization.

It is my great pleasure to work alongside all of our stakeholders as we move forward to accomplish the goals each task force sets in line with our strategic priorities to continue the positive economic growth in the Dickinson Area.



With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'mym'.

Mindy Meyers  
Executive Director

## MISSION AND PURPOSE

We work to make the Dickinson area a robust community to do business, live, and work. We do this by bringing together business, government, education, and community organizations to stimulate the economy.



## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

The Alliance has data and resources to help businesses, individuals, and governments make informed decisions about the Dickinson area's economic health. We have access to and relationships with regional, state, national and international economic development organizations to support our own expertise.

<b>239</b>	Business Retention Visits
<b>105</b>	Project Specific/Business Support
<b>92</b>	Community Partner Meetings
<b>1</b>	Start Ups
<b>7</b>	Business Attraction Projects

## ASSISTANCE TOPICS COVERED

Grow the Dickinson County area economy by retaining, recruiting, and growing talent for our growing employer base as well as promoting business retention & expansion, government relations & advocacy, and infrastructure & housing development.

<b>42</b>	Financing
<b>249</b>	Information Shared/Consulted
<b>18</b>	Talent
<b>6</b>	Marketing
<b>64</b>	Advocacy
<b>23</b>	Site Location

## VOLUNTEERS

We thank all the volunteers who share their time and talent to help us advance our mission.

<b>111</b>	Individual Volunteers
<b>832</b>	Estimated Volunteer Hours

# GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & ADVOCACY TASK FORCE

*Advocating for businesses and our community.*

We build relationships with elected officials and government organizations to advocate for the community. We enhance the area's existing natural and civic resources and strive to improve the quality of life.

Joe Stevens, Chair

Dave Brisson, Dale Cook, Mark Pontti, Trenton Rankin

- Co-hosted a Legislative Reception with Senator Ed McBroom, UP Travel, Tourism Association of the Dickinson Area, and Enbridge at the Ski Jumps in February with 60 attendees, including U.S. Senator Elissa Slotkin and her staff.
- Co-hosted roundtable discussion with the Small Business Retention and Growth Task Force on *Preparing for Changes to Paid Sick Leave, Wage Laws, and Exempt Salary Threshold* in January.
- Hosted Loadmaster and Sturgeon Falls HydroDam tours for elected officials, city managers, and board members.
- Spring visit in Lansing with legislative and department leaders.
- Building relationships with local, state and federal elected officials and expanding relationships with Wisconsin elected officials.



## INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

*Improving access to infrastructure data and encouraging new development opportunities.*

We engage with regional and state government organizations to develop plans for improved infrastructure and housing development.

Tony Edlebeck, Chair

Brian Bousley, Luke Carey, Dale Cook, Ryan Gordon, Jim Harris, Gary Hoaglund, Kyle Mulka, Steve Mulka, Ryan Soucy, Jordan Stanchina, Mike Stelmaszek, Dan Stoltman, Joe Stevens, Michelle Bal

- Advocacy for new housing development tools:
  - MSHDA Mi Neighborhood Program,
  - MEDC Developer Tools,
  - Tax Increment Financing,
  - Build U.P. fund through InvestUP.
- Collaborating with Marquette County's Housing Specialist, Antonio Adan, on Housing Projects and with Anne Giroux, Build UP Director of Development and Investment Services with Invest UP.
- Updating available properties with Dickinson County municipal and township assessors for site readiness.
- The Dickinson County Brownfield Authority recommended a Brownfield plan with Eden Properties for a maximum of \$932,650 in property tax reductions over an estimated 17 years. Consequently, the City of Iron Mountain and the Dickinson County Board approved the plan.
- Dickinson County Landbank renovated and sold its first home. It also plans to construct three new homes on Lehman Ave in Iron Mountain.
- 224 building permits were pulled in 2025, resulting in 32 new homes
- The updated aerial mapping for the GIS System was added with 6-inch pixel quality late last year for Iron Mountain, Kingsford, Norway, and Breitung Township.
- Kingsford is continuing with a multi-year water main and water service line replacement project in the city. This work is being accomplished due to the State of Michigan mandate to replace all water services that contain any lead components. In addition, the street are being reconstructed that includes replacing curbing and much of the sidewalks.
- Iron Mountain has completed identifying water services containing lead components and to replace that contain lead. Iron Mountain will begin a major water and sanitary sewer replacement project beginning in 2026.
- Breitung Township is endeavoring on a project to upgrade the water system in East Kingsford. It was recently announced that they plan to replace 368 water services in the next two years.

## INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE (CONTINUED)

- Norway is in the process of identifying any remaining water services containing lead components that require replacement.
- The Dickinson Trail Network along with the City of Iron Mountain, City of Norway and Pine Mountain continues to add and maintain several areas of multi-use trails. Pine Mountain has added several new trails to the ski hill and ski jump areas and has added chair lift service to accommodate bikers to access the top of the hill from the parking/lodge area.
  - The Iron Mountain Pewabic Hill trail has been completed, and a ribbon cutting was held on September 6, 2025.
  - The trails along with the Pine Mountain 500 steps are not only being utilized by residents and visitors, but have been incorporated in a number of events.
- The Dickinson County Ford Airport continues to expand. New hangars are being constructed, both private and county-owned; the county has relocated some of its offices to this area, and new aerial-related services businesses are being added. The County continues to evaluate additional developments of the airport properties.
- The City of Kingsford has constructed the first phase of a new sanitary sewer main from the Kingsford Heights Area to Woodward Avenue. This new gravity sanitary sewer will replace two sanitary lift stations installed in 1958. In addition will provide sanitary sewer service for properties north of Woodward Avenue owned by Dickinson County, adjacent to the airport and other privately owned properties.
- The County Road Commission is continuing with Townships to make improvements to various county and township roads throughout the County.
- The City of Iron Mountain and the Michigan Department of Transportation are continuing discussions to improve traffic control in the area of US2 and the Home Depot, Culvers, Aldi, and the new Carlos Cantina.



# TALENT & EDUCATION TASK FORCE

*Recruit, retain, and grow the talent needed to support our employers' workforce needs.*

Throughout the year, we raise awareness of career paths through local school districts, the DIISD Tech Center and Bay College Iron Mountain Campus to grow the talent pipeline for investor businesses.

Michelle Copley, Chair

Members: Justin Cowen, Carmen Frank, Tanya Hiltonen, David Holmes, Sereena Johnson, Lisa Villringer, Joe Tinti, Shelly Petrusch, David Lindbeck, Aaron Yonke, Jerry Sardina, Sara Pericolosi, Megan Elsey, Megan Barglind-Rodman, Jason Sullivan, Amy Gibbs, Susan Moll, Brandon Jerue, Eric Printz, Nate Burklund

- The CTE Magazine was released in late spring, highlighting career paths and educational options to help students gain the skills and knowledge needed to be successful right out of high school.
- Recognized area graduating seniors pursuing a skilled trades career path through the CTE Grad Recognition Program in the spring.
- Hosted a successful Manufacturing Day at Bay College Iron Mountain Campus for 300 ninth-grade students who experienced the hands-on skills needed by our local manufacturers.
- Held First Annual Healthcare Career Day for 300 area tenth-grade students who experienced hands-on healthcare careers needed by our local healthcare employers.
- Planned a 5 Year Hiring Projection Survey.
- Created Industry Directory for educators.



# SMALL BUSINESS RETENTION & GROWTH TASK FORCE

*Promoting and acknowledging the value of businesses in our community.*

We advocate for our small business community, promoting them through awareness programs and providing training sessions to help them navigate the challenges.

Ryan Danielson, Chair

Benji Wood, Suzanne Larson, Nicole Lutz, Kevin Hanson, Jen Raiche, Jake Hogberg

- Co-hosted 2 roundtable discussions with the Government Relationship & Advocacy Task Force on *Preparing for Changes to Paid Sick Leave, Wage Laws, and Exempt Salary Threshold* in January.
- Hosted a Small Business Luncheon with presentations on How to Leverage AI with Mark Klossner of Many Hats Marketing and Fraud Prevention with Range Bank in May.
- Hosted a presentation on Hiring and Retention with Jenna Smith from Manpower and Nicole Potvin from the Small Business Development Center.
- Worked with the Central UP Small Business Support Hub to encourage grant applications. UP Small Business Support Hub Grant winners from Dickinson County include:

Preferred Power Sports  
Moose Jackson Café  
Print Blvd  
Open Healing Space  
Superior Genomics  
Open Door Life Coach & Counseling LLC  
Life Fit Brain Fit LLC  
Lake State Land Surveying Inc.  
Eureka Tire Company



# SMALL BUSINESS RETENTION & GROWTH TASK FORCE (CONTINUED)

## LOYAL 2 LOCAL

### ► 8 Years of Loyal 2 Local

Since its beginning, Loyal 2 Local has proudly inspired residents to shop local and reinvest in the Dickinson area. Through this initiative, businesses, community members, and partners have strengthened our local economy and celebrated what makes our area unique. With this mission successfully rooted in our community, it's time to take the next step forward.

Beginning in 2026, Loyal 2 Local will transition fully into The Alliance, ensuring the stay-local message continues with even greater reach and impact. Many thanks to the Loyal 2 Local Planning Committee for their commitment to supporting local businesses and their efforts in sharing the Loyal 2 Local message – Shana Thompson-Hegy, Kevin Hanson, Nicole Lutz, Pete Tomassoni, and Christie Lofholm.



## MARKETING & BRANDING

*Communicating the benefits of living, working, and investing in the Dickinson Area.*

MMH and Lake Superior Community Partnership (LSCP)

Elsa Pontbriand, Seth Anderson, Ashley Saari, Ashley Szczepanski

- In 2024, we dissolved the Marketing & Branding task force since we retain MMH and LSCP for marketing strategy and support.
- Promotion of task force activities.
- Planning for website redesign and branding update.
- Created content strategy to align marketing communication efforts with The Alliance strategic plan priority areas.
- Article placements on UPWord Michigan and Rural Insights.
- Continuing to add to the media library for marketing and communication efforts.

## BELONG DICKINSON

*The new living and working initiative of The Alliance.*

Quality of life increases when individuals find community where they are united with others through shared interests. This initiative tells the story of living and working through the eyes of an employee by exploring employment, community involvement and the relationships resulting from feeling a sense of belonging when living and working in the Dickinson area.

MMH - Elsa Pontbriand and Seth Anderson

- Produced and completed Systems Control and Marshfield Medical Center-Dickinson stories for January 2025 launch.
- Began production on Champion, Inc. story.
- Built [belongdickinson.org](https://belongdickinson.org), prepared social channels, and podcast channel.

### How to participate

Belong Dickinson is an investor-sponsored multi-media talent recruitment and retention initiative. It is open to all investors for an additional fee. Visit [mountainmedia.house/belong](https://mountainmedia.house/belong) for more information about the program, including what you get and the cost.



WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL THE OSCAR G. JOHNSON VA MEDICAL CENTER IS THE BENEFICIARY OF AN ENDOWED FUND THROUGH THE DICKINSON AREA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION.

FOR GOOD FOR EVER.



WE LIVE IN SUCH A NICE NEIGHBORHOOD.

THE FORD ADDITION PARADE IS A TRADITION GOING BACK TO 1959.

ABOUT 8-9 YEARS AGO WE VOLUNTEERED TO KEEP THE TRADITION GOING.



A Dickinson Area Economic Development Alliance Podcast

# BELONG



OUR MOTTO  
**TRIDENT IS SAFETY FIRST.**  
Maritime Style

EVERY ACTIVE NAVY SHIP OUT THERE HAS A PART THAT WE BUILT ON DECK.

IT'S VERY IMPORTANT WORK THAT WE DO.

# BELONG



DICKINSON AREA  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
**ALLIANCE**

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