The Michiganders of Gov. Snyder's 8th State of the State



"I knew there was a way back, but I didn't know how good it would be."
- Salvador Gutierrez, Holland

Salvador Gutierrez was incarcerated in 2015 for selling drugs. A year out from his release from prison, he enrolled in the Vocational Village at Richard Handlon Correctional Facility in Ionia and began learning CNC Machining. Salvador completed all tiers of the CNC machining course that cover manual machining using mills and lathes, precision measuring, operation and programming of CNC machines. He earned a total of 4 nationally recognized certificates issued by immersive engineering. After completing his course he stayed in the class to work as a tutor and mentor new students.

Today, Salvador works at Transmatic in Holland and earns $21/hour. He has purchased his own car and lives in an apartment. He was recently featured in a national video with Mike Rowe of Dirty Jobs about successful prisoner reentry programs.

Vocational Village enrolls offenders nearing their prison release date in classes that prepare them with in-demand skills. They also learn soft skills, such as resume building, budgeting and how to use a bank account. The Village connects with area employers, particularly in the areas of auto mechanics, manufacturing and robotics, to connect offenders with job opportunities even before they leave prison.



"People think FIRST Robotics is about robots – like fighting each other in the movies. They don't realize what these kids are doing is preparing them for real life and truly impacting the lives of others."
– Stacy Nelson, Central Lake, Father of Jeremiah

Jeremiah Nelson was born in 2016 with spina bifida, and his short life has been punctuated by surgeries and frequent trips to hospitals. His entire life changed in December of 2017, when his Early On coordinator pulled together two FIRST Robotics teams in Northern Michigan to customize a Power Wheels car for Jeremiah, who is now coasting around home, church and even the school on his own. The high school students from Central Lake and Petoskey fully customized the car without instructions, using science, engineering and math skills along with critical reasoning to make the Power Wheels a fully functioning vehicle. Along with being a major economic driver in Michigan, the rapidly-expanding mobility industry holds true promise for those with disabilities – giving them independence and autonomy to travel in ways they never even thought possible.

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"My career in the Marine Corps was fulfilling in every way, and I honestly didn't think I could find such a rewarding career outside of the military. Roush has changed that – I feel valued in my work and I'm able to commit myself to helping other veterans connect their military experience with existing job openings."
– Kyle Jastren, Livonia

From United States Marine to General Manager, Kyle Jastren's life has changed in many ways over the past few years. But following his successful transition from the military world to manufacturing, one thing that has remained the same is Jastren's commitment to his fellow veterans--and he is building a team of them in his new managerial role. As one of the Military and Veterans Affairs Agency's certified Veteran-Friendly Employers, Roush is committed to prioritizing the hiring of veterans from all branches of service and encouraging other employers to do the same.



"Detroit has been innovating and building things for years. They are hungry for the opportunity to do it again - that's what's different about this place."
-Kristin Ides Hope, Detroit

Growing up in California and graduating from college in San Francisco, Kristin Hope expected to stay in Silicon Valley and grind it out in the world's tech epicenter. But with an oversaturation of graduates and the crushing cost of living on the West Coast, Kristin's ideals and curiosity led her to seek out a little-known but rapidly-evolving tech hub. After moving to Detroit in 2015, Kristin found work with a startup, and then another startup. . . and then another startup. Her current gig is working at Autobooks, which recently moved their headquarters from Troy to the Madison Building in downtown Detroit. She also teaches digital marketing at the College for Creative Studies.

Kristin frequently encourages friends and family to choose Detroit over Silicon Valley or Seattle, and she has a five-year vision for Detroit – and for herself in Detroit.

Gov. Snyder pledged in 2017 to grow the state's population to 10 million by 2020. With new residents like Kristin growing the state quickly, we're only 32,679 residents away from that goal!

Maximizing Michigan's MOMENTUM
GOVERNOR RICK SNYDER