

Building a Future-Ready Workforce

Michigan Central is creating a talent pipeline for all ages focused on tech and mobility



Michigan Central is a 30-acre innovation hub transforming how people, goods, and services move through the world. Launched in 2023 with an ambitious vision, Michigan Central has become a nationally recognized ecosystem providing the infrastructure, resources, workforce development programs, and diverse network for partnership and collaboration required to build and scale new technologies that drive real-world impact. However, people are also essential to accelerating progress. Michigan Central is dedicated to fostering a highly-skilled

talent pool, powered by community and academic partnerships, from PreK-12 youth to post-secondary students to adults seeking economic mobility. Our initiatives focus on creating pathways to careers in emerging industries, strengthening Detroit’s talent ecosystem.

More than 3,000 youth and adults have been served through our talent programs since 2023 to attract and retain key talent to fill Michigan’s vast pipeline of opportunities like advanced manufacturing, robotics, and aerial mobility.

New Partner: Grand Valley State University

GVSU joins as a new key partner in the Michigan Central ecosystem to expand workforce development and educational opportunity in Detroit.

Collaboration will address critical skills gaps by preparing students and workers for in-demand careers, opening new pathways for Detroit learners, and connecting education to industry through a growing innovation ecosystem.



Youth Talent Development Initiatives

Since June 2024, **more than 2,300 young people have been directly impacted by our learning and activity programs**, thanks to collaborations with ~20 local youth organizations.

Michigan Central’s Youth STEM Lab inside The Station is a central hub for engagement and programming providing hands-on exposure to technology and entrepreneurship.

Over summer 2025, Michigan Central **partnered with 12 local youth organizations** to curate tailored experiential learning programs for nearly 450 students with opportunities to continue learning and growing critical skills that prepare them for high school, college, or future careers.

- **Lab Drawer:** Practical lab experiences
- **YouthTank:** Foundational entrepreneurship workshops
- **Engineering Society of Detroit:** Connected with Michigan Central community builder Femology who hosted a workshop for 35 girls that taught the foundations of being an entrepreneur

Boys & Girls Club SE MI equips youth with the skills needed for careers in automation, robotics and mobility through Industry Clubs, which will launch on the Youth Floor in The Station this winter.

Michigan Central and the Detroit Public Schools Community District Foundation teamed up in 2023 to build **a special pilot program called the Mobility Career Pathway**. The goal is to help students gain exposure and prepare for careers in mobility, with hands-on learning and a new Ford Future Builders Lab opening at Western International High School this year with partner Ford Philanthropy.

One of Michigan Central’s main youth partners is **CODE313**, which inspires and educates students in drone technology and coding, offering pathways to Drone Pilot Certification:

Michigan Central received **\$2M in funding from Google.org** to supercharge our STEM programs for youth in the community. This is on top of the already significant impact made by the Google and Michigan Central partnership, reaching over 300 students through programs like Code Next.

900+

YOUTH DRONE DEMO DAY PARTICIPANTS OVER PAST 3 YEARS

130+

STUDENTS COMPLETED THE CODE313 TRAINING PROGRAM

20+

STUDENTS HAVE RECEIVED THEIR FAA PART 107 REMOTE PILOT CERTIFICATE, THE LICENSE REQUIRED TO FLY DRONES FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

Post-Secondary Skills Programming

Post-secondary initiatives lead to attraction and retention of top talent from academic institutions and industry. The significant impact is twofold, reaching both students and our growing ecosystem with **170+ faculty and staff from 9 institutions** engaged as well as **130+ students from 25+ colleges/schools** across 8 universities hosted at Michigan Central.

Michigan universities co-located at Michigan Central, creating dozens of fellowships/ internships, consulting teams and post-secondary programming for startup members.

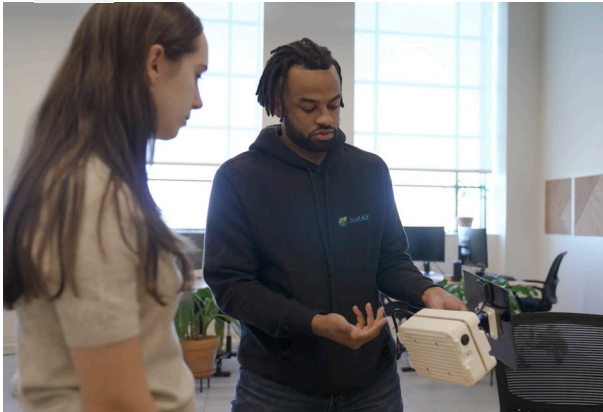
- **Wayne State University** is a Michigan Central partner and tenant with satellite/ co-location space
- **University of Michigan Center for Innovation (UMCI)** is a Michigan Central partner and tenant with space

15-month MI Mobility fellowship for recent graduates interested in Michigan's mobility landscape: Inaugural cohort of 10 recent graduates launched October 2024, with half working with Newlab Detroit startups like JustAir and ESSPI

- Partners: Office of Future Mobility and Electrification, CEDAM, and Wayne State University

Connected 25+ Newlab Detroit Founders to talent & resources by STEM interns, student consulting teams, and recent graduates.

- Expanded employer eligibility for Newlab startups through partnerships with MEDC's STEAM Ahead, Michigander Scholars, and UM Ross's Zell Lurie Institute internship programs
- Supported Newlab founders with **5 MI Mobility Fellows** and **14 MEDC interns** (serving 11 founders) in the past year
- **Matched 4 Newlab startups with student consulting teams** for winter 2025 through University of Michigan's Detroit Neighborhood Entrepreneurs Project
- **8 Newlab founders secured no-cost interns** for summer 2025 through Wayne State Warrior Impact Interns



Adult Economic Mobility

Adult programming provides upskilling and reskilling opportunities to equip Detroiters the skills for high-demand sectors. Michigan Central, with its partners, have served more than **600 adult learners** through September 2025.

Business Roundtable of Industry Leaders is a **group of 100+ leading companies** (startups and corporate entities) that provide industry-informed approach to skills development, and vet programming partners and curriculum. The most recent September 2025 session was focused on the Clean Tech sector.

Talent Innovation Training Fund launched summer 2025 after applicants selected and **provides capital for startups to train staff in critical skills and roles** that advance their company.

- Provided 14 startups - including 10 Newlab members - with funding of **up to \$10,000 per person to train** for areas like advanced manufacturing and robotics
- Partners: State of Michigan's Labor and Economic Opportunity and Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation



Credential Based Tech Training is led and credentialed by university partners, providing cutting-edge tech skills to meet talent needs for startups and industry:

- 'Saturdays in the D' program is an adult drone training at Michigan Central and while ongoing, the two cohorts over summer 2025 saw a **100% completion rate for 45+ students** and now **14+ students are ready to take the FAA exam for pilot certification**

Partners: UMCI, City of Detroit, and Newlab Detroit founder Drone Capital



HIGHLIGHT

Free skills-training program for adults on electric vehicle charger maintenance had a 90% completion rate and 20% of graduates have already landed jobs in EV and tech, and some have even launched startups



EQUITABLE ECOSYSTEM

To create a truly equitable ecosystem of learners and doers, Michigan Central actively builds bridges for underrepresented founders through enabling programs like with Michigan Central community builder Femology.

