

TACTIC: Annual Report
Capital Area Michigan Works!
Submitted by Piper & Gold Public Relations

Research: Capital Area Michigan Works! is a workforce development and talent investment organization that partners with businesses to develop recruiting and retention strategies for top talent. The government agency also works with job seekers to enhance education and career opportunities.

CAMW!'s ability to change and evolve is a reflection of a robust and integrated network of employers, education partners, councils, labor partners, economic development, regional planning, subcontractors and leadership boards. This has remained consistently true over time, and celebrating the importance of the connections formed within the community resonated with CAMW! CEO Edythe Copeland. It felt particularly relevant as the 2019 annual report is her final one as she prepares for retirement.

Mood board concepts were presented to the CAMW! team that refined several ideas into a strategy that highlights the impact of the vision of 2018's annual report, *Influencing Tomorrow*, which proved the work the organization is doing today is influencing a better tomorrow for its customers and communities. *Connected Together*, the 2019 annual report, did just that by telling the story of how collaboration and interconnectivity helps to support success and ongoing achievements.

Piper & Gold Public Relations worked collaboratively with Copeland and CAMW! staff members to track down the facts and figures behind the work CAMW! does. As a government entity, CAMW! collects extensive statistics and data on its programs and participants, so the team spent hours deep within the data to pull out elements that validated the impact of the people, programs and services that develop as a result of strong connections. Moreover, we went beyond quantitative data and dug deeper to discover qualitative data relating to personal experiences, achievements and highlights that validate the importance of the careful planning of programs, trainings and other ways CAMW! works to meet the needs of the community.

Planning/Content:

Objective: The goal of the 2019 annual report was to shine a light on the high-level strategies from CAMW!'s mission and articulate the value of the connections made within the community, and their role in building and maintaining those connections with robust and integrated programs and networks, while also allowing the outgoing CEO to leave a final testament to her legacy at CAMW!.

To do this, we hired a local photographer to capture photography from partners across the region in a variety of industries to help tell the story of real people within the community — a dream of Copeland's since she took the CEO position. We featured the diversity of the workforce — culturally and professionally — in interactive settings either on-the-job and in training to show the tangible results from successful relationships and job placements through CAMW!. Data was integrated throughout the report formatted as single, visualized information so the direct impact of specific programs and connections can be identified and understood.

The report opened with a letter from Copeland, who used it as a platform to announce her retirement. She also described the importance of CAMW!'s relationships and interconnected networks and the success of the organization and all of its community partners. Her words set the stage for the featured organizations, programs and people throughout the report and reinforced the value and impact of CAMW!.

Target Audience: CAMW! board members, legislators, stakeholders, community partners, local employers and system staff.

Budget: Continuing the trend in cost reduction for the annual report due to declining funding, we designed, wrote and printed the 2019 annual report with featuring custom photography with a budget of \$4,500.

Execution: Board members were presented with an annual report at the holiday open house and system celebration, where Copeland highlighted key facts and accomplishments. Additional copies of the annual report were shared with more than 100 key stakeholders and community leaders, while staff, clients and other community partners could also access the report online. The annual report will also be distributed in March 2020 in the next CAMW! quarterly newsletter, which reaches over 2,000 board members, legislators, stakeholders, community partners and local employers.

Additionally, annual report infographics and data were broken into bite-size social media graphics where they are currently being shared. Copeland praised the 2019 annual report as resonating deeply with her values and motives throughout her leadership at CAMW!, and the CAMW! team and stakeholders all unanimously appreciated the final product. Ultimately, the 2019 annual report will become a part of a toolkit CAMW! can use to help the community understand its mission of connecting with business and strengthening our workforce.