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## Event Calendar



## Message from Mark



I would like to start today's message by thanking each of you for your dedication and commitment. I know that every department in Macomb County strives to serve our residents with passion and diligence. I would like to give special recognition to two specific departments for their work: the IT Department and the Planning & Economic Development Department. IT and MCPED recently received five NACo Achievement Awards for providing effective and innovative services to their communities. I am very proud of this accomplishment and want to

congratulate all of the individuals involved in this work. To learn more about their awards, click [here](#).

Now, summer is just around the corner and departments across the county are planning great events for our residents (and us too!). Please consider attending and/or sharing the following:

- The annual [Sprint and Splash](#) is slated for Saturday, June 16 from 7:30 a.m. to noon at Lake St. Clair Metropark. Offering five events by land and lake, this event benefits our Metroparks and the Clinton River Watershed Council. Spectators are welcome to join competitors at the rocking Beach Village, which features music, food, craft beer and lots of vendors with products or services to share.
- Our Bicentennial Torch Relay is a 200-mile torch relay that traverses all 27 communities. It will begin at 5:38 a.m. on June 21 and end at 9:45 p.m. on June 22, kicking off the Mt. Clemens Fireworks. Employees are invited to get involved!
- FLW will visit Lake St. Clair Metropark from Thursday, June 29 through Sunday, July 1 with top anglers competing for a prize of \$250,000! Our Department of Planning & Economic Development is partnering with the Sterling Heights Regional Chamber of Commerce and NASH FM 93.1 to host the accompanying [Bass, Brews & BBQ Festival](#). Join us for eats, craft beers, live music and more!

Finally, if you are looking for a meaningful summer experience for a special young person, be sure to check out our new [Day Camp Directory](#) featured on the Make Macomb Your Home website. It offers a searchable list of area summer programs designed to inspire, educate and activate children ages six through 17.

Wherever your summer adventures take you, I wish you a safe and healthy journey! And as always, if you are looking for something to do, be sure to check the MMYH [Calendar](#).

## Employee Focus - Macomb County Athena Nominees

### Human Resources and Labor Relations

[ATHENA International](#) was founded by Martha Mertz in 1982. At that time, she was the only woman serving on the Board of Directors of the Lansing Michigan Regional Chamber of Commerce and she knew that the chamber's boardroom did not reflect the reality of the business community. To reduce this disparity, she developed the ATHENA Leadership Award, an award program dedicated to

## Macomb County Employee Appreciation Night

Thursday, June 14, 2018



### Sprint and Splash Festival of Races

Saturday, June 16, 2018



### Bass, Brews & BBQs

June 29 - July 1, 2018



### Summer Concert Series

June 29 - August 8, 2018



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## Blog Log

[200 miles. 40 hours. 27 communities. 8 torches](#)

[Inspiring Macomb's New Collar Worker: How Macomb County is](#)



recognizing women's achievements as community leaders. The award is presented to individuals who demonstrate professional excellence, participate in community service and support, develop and honor women leaders and inspire women to reach their full potential. To date, more than 7,000 awards

have been presented to women and men worldwide through local ATHENA Award programs. This year, the Macomb Foundation hosted the Macomb County ATHENA Awards and five of their twelve nominees were Macomb County employees, including:

- Linda Azar, Macomb Community Action
- Commissioner [Candice Miller](#), Public Works
- [Vicky Rad](#), Planning and Economic Development
- [Karlyn Semlow](#), Human Resources and Labor Relations
- Vicki Wolber, Emergency Management

The award was presented to [Maggie Varney](#) of [Wigs 4 Kids](#), but our employees were humbled and grateful to be nominated.

#### Linda Azar had this to say:

As one of this year's nominees for the ATHENA Award, I was so honored to be among such inspiring people. They say a community's strength can be measured by how well we treat our most vulnerable, and Macomb County embodies this. As one of several Macomb County government staff nominated, I was proud to stand with them as a testament to the strong commitment to our work and the impact we are making on the community!

#### From Commissioner Miller:

I have always believed that the team is what gets the job done. Throughout my career, I have always tried to surround myself with people who, number one, are of high character, and number two, are skilled in their area of expertise. It has given me great pleasure over the years to be in a position to help advance the careers of others. Oftentimes those who came to work for me as a junior staffer were able to move on to a position of greater responsibility. This has been tremendously gratifying on a personal level. So, to be nominated for the ATHENA Award, which recognizes those who support others in reaching their career goals, was very humbling.

At the Macomb County Public Works Office, I am very proud of the team we have assembled - both the professionals who were here when I arrived, and the key personnel I have hired since I started in January 2017. It is a group of men and women who are fully dedicated to our goals of ensuring quality of life in our communities and using our office as a critical component of economic activity.

#### From Karlyn Semlow:

Just to be nominated for the ATHENA Award was an honor. For me, the attention of being recognized for who I am and doing what I love to do was hard to accept. The highlight of my day was standing side-by-side with Linda Azar, Candice Miller, Vicki Wolber and Vicky Rad. What an amazing honor and privilege it is to serve with some of the most respected and influential women here at Macomb County. At one point, I realized how unique it was that all of us, coming from such vastly different departments within the County, have opportunities to touch the same initiative. The sink hole is one example of this. Of course, Commissioner Miller was on the scene. Vicki Wolber from Emergency Management was responsible for coordinating with the various municipalities involved. The Planning Department served and assisted the local businesses and Macomb Community Action supported families in the area. Human Resources had a role too, because we play

[preparing today's talent for tomorrow's opportunity](#)

[Sprint and Splash: Raising funds to protect our natural resources](#)

[Shop local, shop Hatherly Commons \(Part 1\)](#)

[Shop local, shop Hatherly Commons \(Part 2\)](#)

[How to honor our guardians this Memorial Day](#)

[Sprint & Splash opportunity: Become a beach village exhibitor](#)

[Where to find farm-fresh produce in Macomb County](#)

[The countdown to summer begins](#)

## News Nook

06/05/18 - [Federal INFRA grant paves the way for the \\$185 million reconstruction of Mound Road in Warren and Sterling Heights](#)

05/25/18 - [15 Mile Road sewer repair wins national award](#)

05/10/18 - [Macomb County launches digital guide for children's summer programming and camps](#)

04/09/18 - [Macomb contingent attends 14th annual "Walk-a-Mile in My Shoes" rally](#)

04/09/18 - [Macomb County receives five Achievement Awards from the National Associations of Counties](#)

04/07/18 - [Macomb County economic development team nets record results in 2017](#)

04/07/18 - [Community Mental Health receives Excellence Award](#)

04/03/18 - [Macomb County presents local FIRST Robotics participants with \\$1,000 sponsorships](#)

a part in getting competent people with the necessary skills to the departments they can serve best.

**The Macomb Matters Committee is seeking nominations for the Employee Focus feature. Do you have a co-worker who deserves some recognition? Send an email to [human.resources@macombgov.org](mailto:human.resources@macombgov.org) with your nominee's name and explain why you think they should be featured. Thank you!**

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## Did you Know? - Voluntary Benefits/Open Enrollment

### By Macomb County Human Resources and Labor Relations

Macomb County is once again pleased to offer the following worksite benefits to all full-time employees.

The following benefits will be offered:

- Short-term disability
- Supplemental term life insurance for employee, spouse and children
- Critical care protection
- Accident insurance
- Long-term care
- Identity theft
- LegalShield
- Pet insurance

Interested individuals can enroll in these worksite benefits during an upcoming annual open enrollment period (June 1 – June 30, 2018). Benefit representatives will be on-site at various county locations throughout the month of June to assist employees with enrolling or making changes to existing worksite benefits and to answer questions.

If you have any questions, please contact Human Resources and Labor Relations at [human.resources@macombgov.org](mailto:human.resources@macombgov.org) or 586-469-5280.

You may also contact TMR & Associates at (800) 529-1663 for additional information.

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## Macomb County Employee Appreciation Night



Human Resources and Labor Relations is pleased to host the second annual Macomb County Employee Appreciation Night at Jimmy John's Field on Thursday, June 14, 2018. Join your co-workers as the Diamond Hoppers take on the Utica Unicorns.

Tickets are \$29 per person and include entrance to the game, two drinks and an all-American buffet, featuring:

- Premium Dearborn Brand hot dogs
- Slow-roasted, homemade bbq pulled pork
- Grilled chicken breast
- Fresh pasta salad
- Unlimited Pepsi soft drinks and water

The buffet begins one hour before game time.

For your convenience, all tickets may be purchased through payroll deduction. To enroll, please contact Human Resources and Labor Relations at [human.resources@macombgov.org](mailto:human.resources@macombgov.org) or 586-469-5280 by Friday, May 25, 2018.

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## Macomb County Receives Five Achievement Awards From the National Association of Counties



The Macomb County Department of Information Technology and the Department of Planning and Economic Development were both recently honored with Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo). The annual award program, now in its 48th year, recognized the departments for innovative, effective initiatives that strengthened services for area residents. Awards were given in 18 different categories, including children and youth, criminal justice, county administration, information technology, health and civic engagement. Macomb County received four awards in the "IT" category and one for "County Resiliency: Infrastructure, Energy and Sustainability."

Awards honored the following work:

- **SMS texts to PSAP program (IT)**  
Led by: Thomas Hang, network specialist  
The 911 Short Message Service (SMS) is a text messaging service component of most telephone services. The Public-Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is a call center responsible for answering calls made to emergency telephone numbers for police, firefighting and ambulance services. In a joint agreement with the Association of Public Safety Communications and the National Emergency Number Association, AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon have voluntarily committed to provide text-to-911 services in all areas served by their networks. Macomb County's goal was to comply with the agreement by becoming ready to receive the text-to-911 messages from the public.
- **Agendas and minutes system (IT)**  
Led by: Steve Yelick, project manager  
The Macomb County Board of Commissioners conducts multiple committee meetings every month. Each meeting has a publically-available agenda that



includes documents from all county departments, including contracts, purchase approvals, memos, notices and presentations. In 2015, it was recognized that the manual system of managing these agendas and minutes needed to be digitized. Macomb County's goal in the last year was to create a solution that streamlined this system.

- **ISP conversion (IT)**

Led by: Dave Palmer, network specialist; Dawn Montagne, PC network support technician

The Macomb County Information Technology department implemented inbound/outbound redundant internet connectivity by utilizing the Border Gateway Protocol to be used for exchanging routing information between gateway hosts

- **Coordination of fire dispatch for multiple communities (IT)**

Led by: David King, PC/net support specialist; Robin Chagnon, business systems analyst; Dave Abbott, systems technician; Crystal Montagne, project manager

Macomb County has engaged neighboring communities to share emergency fire dispatch resources and systems. The goal of this project was to implement the Macomb County fire dispatch solution for the Harrison Township Fire Department, Washington Township Fire Department and Mount Clemens Fire Department municipalities. The successful implementation of consolidating the fire services resulted in an increase in centralized management of fire services in the area.

- **Urban Forestry Partnership (MCPED)**

Led by: Gerry Santoro, program manager; Brent Geurink, associate planner  
Green Macomb is an initiative designed to strengthen economic vitality, improve community well-being and enhance our natural environment by supporting and building Macomb County's green infrastructure. Actively engaged partners include local municipalities, utility providers, businesses, nonprofit organizations and residents all guided by various Macomb County departments. Supported through volunteerism and grants from the US Forest Service, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and ITC, the purpose of the Urban Forestry Project is to plant trees in communities with low canopy coverage, high population density and highly impacted sub-watersheds.

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## Perks at Work - Bodhi Seed Yoga and Wellness Studio



Located in the heart of Mount Clemens, Bodhi Seed Yoga & Wellness Studio is offering Macomb County employees exclusive discounts on yoga classes. Discounts include \$10 off all yoga packages and \$10 for a walk-in class. To enjoy the discount, present your employee ID badge at check-in.

"Bodhi Seed Yoga and Wellness Studio is a wonderful place where all levels, from beginner to advanced, will feel welcome," said Patti Dib, chief of staff, Macomb County Board of Commissioners. "Instructors are top-notch, there are a wide variety of class types and times, and workshops and special events are interesting and cutting-edge."

Are you new to yoga? Join Bodhi Seed Yoga & Wellness Studio and the Macomb County Board of Commissioners at Yoga at the Hill on Saturday, June 9, 2018. This free event is open to all ages and levels. To register online visit <http://www.yogaatthehill.com/>.

To learn more about the benefits of yoga and view class descriptions visit <http://bodhiseedyoga.com/>

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## Take Our Daughters And Sons to Work Day



Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day was a huge success thanks to volunteers and participating departments. More than 100 children attended various events throughout the county. Employees and children alike enjoyed hands-on activities with Public Works, Animal Control, Judge Matthew Switalski, COMTEC, Michigan State University Extension, Sheriff's Office and Road Commission.

The program was dedicated to helping our county's daughters and sons explore future opportunities at work and in their communities.

Barbara Caskey, director of Community Corrections, said her son and daughter thoroughly enjoyed the day. "It's such a great event and even if they don't get to see exactly what I do, they get an idea of what the county does. It's hard being a working mom sometimes and I love the idea that they get to see how I spend my time when I'm away at the office."

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## The Detroit Zoo Visits Macomb Community Action Head Start 0-5



Representatives from The Detroit Zoo recently came to several Macomb Community Action Head Start 0-5 classrooms to expose preschool children to the work of the institution. During the visits, zoo representatives shared information on animal welfare, read to the classes and facilitated activities. All of the Head Start children also received plush animal toys

that were purchased by community donors. In total, 14 preschool classrooms at the Macomb County Family Resource Center and at Hatherly Elementary were able to participate in the opportunity.

Macomb County Deputy Executive Al Lorenzo was present for a visit. "Our Head Start children were very excited about The Detroit Zoo coming to their classrooms," he said. "It was a wonderful opportunity for these preschoolers to learn about being kind to all animals and we are thankful to the Zoo educators for being so gracious with their time."

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## New Requirements for Teacher Aides in MCA



### Recruiting Challenges Are No Match for Head Start Staff

Recruiting qualified candidates is always the top priority when filling county positions, but sometimes there are challenges in this process. For instance, one consistent challenge for Macomb Community

Action (MCA) was hiring part-time teacher aides for its Head Start program, an initiative that provides high-quality school readiness at no cost for children ages zero to five. Currently, there are 70 part-time teacher aide positions for 34 Head Start classrooms throughout Macomb County, and historically, this position has never been 100 percent staffed. Head Start Program Managers Maralyn McNally and Kathleen Nicosia summed up the struggle this way: "We always seemed to be chasing our tails in filling the teacher aide positions. We would fill one and get two resignations the next day. It was a constant cycle in motion—posting, interviewing, hiring; then start over."

Toward the end of 2017, MCA's Head Start program had 10 teacher aide vacancies. At that time, the current minimum requirement for the position was for an applicant to be enrolled and taking classes in an Early Childhood Education

(ECD) program at a college. They could also have the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

McNally and Nicosia thought that making a change to the job description would help them get fully staffed. So they consulted with Human Resources and Labor Relations and developed a strategy to reduce the minimum education requirement. Then, once individuals were hired, the program managers would facilitate the required ECD training for new teacher aides. MCA Head Start participates in the Michigan T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program, so the newly hired staff could participate in a variety of learning options while maintaining employment. For example, CDA classes are held online and the program offers continuing education in ECD and other relevant trainings like Diversity, Trauma Smart and Teaching Strategies GOLD. Opportunities like this certainly make the teacher aide position attractive to potential candidates.

### **Where to Find Qualified Applicants**

Experience with a Head Start program is always a desired quality in candidates, so one of the questions asked in teacher aide interviews is: "What do you know about the Macomb County Head Start Program?" Well, who knows the benefits of the program better than the current or former parents of Head Start participants? The change in the minimum education requirement opened the door to recruiting these individuals, a group already familiar with the program and its value.

Over the next few months, the MCA team began reaching out to this new pool of applicants. And the strategy worked. As of March 5, 2018, for the first time ever, all teacher aide positions were filled and supporting the Head Start classrooms. McNally and Nicosia welcome the opportunity to congratulate former Head Start parents on their career success and are happy to provide them with the tools, education and encouragement necessary to be the most important teacher in their children's lives. They are role models of the success of the Head Start program.

### **A Success Story**

In addition to parents filling teacher aide positions, the Head Start program in Macomb County boasts another success story that hits very close to home. Rhonda Powell, a former Macomb County Head Start student, was named as the new director of MCA in 2014. She fully believes in the great value of the program, its teachers, teacher aides and support staff.

"I still recall the morning thanks we recited before our snack," Powell said. "We used to say: 'Thank you for the food we eat, thank you for the flowers sweet! Thank you for the birds that sing, we say thanks for everything!' The importance of children learning from and interacting with caring, nurturing adults can never be overstated."

Powell's personal journey demonstrates the significance of selecting qualified candidates to fill Head Start positions and validates the hard work program leaders put into updating its recruitment process.

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## **Paw Print - No bones about it, You Are Going to love Dogtopia!**

### **A note from Chief Randazzo, Macomb County Animal Control Division**

Travel plans for this summer have you going doggone crazy? Chief Randazzo is here to help shed (no pun intended) some light on things to consider when choosing a boarding facility for your pet when you decide to head out on vacation.

As a dog owner, I know the troubled feeling of planning a vacation and then wondering: "What am I going to do with Major (my amazing dog)? Who can watch him? Where's the best place to board him?" If you ask the same questions about your pet, do not panic! There are some great, credible facilities to board your fur babies. But there are a few things to consider before you pick the right place.

First, you should figure out the needs of your pet and make a list of what you want from a facility. Do you have a young puppy who needs a lot of exercise? Is your pet geriatric and does it require some extra TLC? Does your pet take medication or need other special care? Do you want a facility that offers indoor or indoor/outdoor kennels? Are playgroups and yard time a priority? This should all be a part of your list.

Once you have that ready, you can begin your research. Personal referrals are helpful, and of course, there is the internet. Select a few facilities that you feel might be contenders and then do some legwork. Make a personal visit and request a tour. During your visit, look around and ask questions. Inquire about the security, safety practices and the supervision. I am always concerned about who will be watching my Major. So ask your tour guide who is watching the animals and how often. Ask them what they would do if your pet became ill or was injured. These are all important questions that the facility representatives should be able to answer. Do not be afraid to ask.

If you are looking for a place to start your research, [Dogtopia](#) in Utica has recently extended a [discount](#) to Macomb County employees. While we do not offer any official endorsements, we did pay an unannounced visit to this Dogtopia and found all areas of the facility to be very clean. The staff was welcoming and the animals were engaged in a supervised play group. One great feature they provide is webcam access for helicopter pet parents such as myself. And they also offer spa services, so while you are away, you can treat your pet to a wonderful spa experience. With that kind of pampering, your fur babies will enjoy their vacation as much as you enjoy yours.

Once you make your list, do your research and receive answers to your questions, you are ready to make reservations - for you and your pet! Go ahead and enjoy your summer.

Chief Randazzo

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## Recipe Corner - Asparagus Guacamole Dip

### Ingredients

- 1 bunch fresh asparagus
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 2 avocados, chopped
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 1 ¼ tbsp. lime juice



### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Wash asparagus then trim two inches off the bottom of each stalk.
3. Toss asparagus in oil, salt and pepper. Roast at 350°F for 6-8 minutes or until tender. Let cool and refrigerate until ready to use.
4. Wash and chop cilantro.
5. Wash and chop green onions.
6. Wash, peel and chop avocado.
7. Place all ingredients into a food processor and blend until smooth. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

### Chef Notes:



- Serve your guacamole with whole grain tortilla chips or sliced pita bread.
- Try dipping vegetables in your guacamole.
- Use guacamole as a topping for toast, chili, Mexican dishes, chicken or pasta. (The guacamole will serve as a sauce!)
- Use your guacamole in place of mayo or ketchup on a burger or sandwich.



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