

- [Message from Mark](#)
- [Employee Focus - Wendy Smith, Service Partner](#)
- [Public Health Associate Program](#)
- [Volunteers Needed for Wellness Warriors](#)
- [It's tax preparation time!](#)
- [Sprint and Splash Returns in June](#)
- [Take Our Daughters And Sons to Work Day - April 26, 2018](#)
- [Hare Today, Abandoned Tomorrow!](#)
- [Celebrating Macomb's bicentennial](#)
- [April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month](#)
- [Veggie Skillet Hash](#)

## Message from Mark



Believe it or not, spring has arrived. It was a long, snowy winter but warmer days are ahead. I am looking forward to getting outdoors more and enjoying all that Macomb County has to offer.

I hope you might consider joining me as a participant in a couple of upcoming events:

- Saturday, April 28: McLaren [Let's Move Festival of Races](#) in downtown Mount Clemens. Featuring a ½ marathon, 10K, 5K and 1 mile runs, this event offers something for almost everyone. Proceeds benefit the Macomb Food Program and Care House of Macomb County.
- Sunday, April 29: [March for Babies](#) at Lake St. Clair Metropark. This three-mile walk helps more babies to be born healthy.
- Saturday, June 16: [Sprint and Splash](#) at Lake St. Clair Metropark features a 5K run/walk, duathlon (5K run and 2-mile paddle), 2-mile kayak race, 2-mile stand-up paddleboard and sanctioned 6-mile SUP. Organized by our department of Planning & Economic Development, this event benefits the Huron Clinton Metropark Authority and the Clinton River Watershed Council.

Of all the runs scheduled for this spring and summer, the one I am most looking forward to is the Bicentennial Torch Relay. The 200-mile route will cover all of our 27 communities and end in downtown Mount Clemens just in time to set off the city's annual fireworks show.

For more ideas about how to enjoy the warmer weather, visit the event calendar on [www.MakeMacombYourHome.com](http://www.MakeMacombYourHome.com)

## Event Calendar



Preorder forms available at [green.macombgov.org](http://green.macombgov.org)



## Employee Focus - Wendy Smith, Service Partner

### Human Resources and Labor Relations

When Oakland University approached Wendy Smith, Service Partner for Macomb County's Human Resources and Labor Relations Department, and asked to feature her as an Oakland University [success story](#), she was surprised and reluctant. "I didn't really know what the big deal was; I went to OU and got a degree. And now they wanted to put my story in their magazine and put my picture on a billboard." But there was more to her story. Prior to coming to work for Macomb County, Wendy Smith



worked on an assembly line for one of the "Big Three" automakers. Even though it

## April Meditation Classes

April 9, 16, 23 & 30  
5:00pm - 6:00pm



Tuesday, April 17, 2018



April 26, 2018



## 200 Years, 200 Million Steps

April 2 - 29, 2018



Saturday, June 16, 2018

## Blog Log

[Green Macomb Tree & Plant Sale; orders due April 5](#)

[Green Macomb Urban Forestry Partnership](#)

paid well, it was not work that she found particularly fulfilling. She was there for nine years, and in 2008, when the company offered "buy-outs," she accepted. She says "It wasn't an easy decision. I was walking away from a lot of money. And it would mean I had to go back to school. But I had to take the chance."

In 2009, Wendy began studying human resources at Baker College. Not long after, the mother of five divorced. "That was tough. The economy had tanked, I was unemployed, and scared." She took an administrative position at a local forklift dealership. "But I knew I had to stay in school. So there I was, a single mom, with five kids, working full time and going to college full time." In 2013, she accepted a Typist Clerk position in the Human Resources and Labor Relations department. Then before the year was over, she was promoted to Team Coordinator. She completed her Bachelor's degree that same year. However, she noticed there was quite a difference between human resources in the public sector as compared to human resources in the private sector. She decided to bridge the knowledge gap through Oakland University's Masters of Public Administration program. "That degree offered me a broad range of career opportunities, and there were many classes at the Anton Frankel Center right here in downtown Mt. Clemens. It was really convenient." She graduated with her MPA in April of 2017 and was promoted to Service Partner six months later.

Unlike her job on the assembly line, Wendy knows working for Macomb County suits her. "I find something rewarding in almost everything I do. I have the privilege of interacting with lots of people from many different departments. I love working for the public sector. I feel like I'm contributing to my community. I like to feel that the people I meet feel heard, valued and respected. Helping others, anticipating needs and delivering results are some of the core values of what we do in HRLR. I'm really invested in that, and so is my department. I'm very grateful and very lucky." She is also thankful to her five children, who supported her throughout the endeavor. "I could get kind of grumpy, and they had to eat a lot of carry out. But they put up with it."

Wendy, who recently married, isn't sure what the future holds, but she looks forward to it. "I never could have guessed how this would turn out. Ten years ago I was building cars on an assembly line. But it wasn't for me. I was really unhappy. Today I have a career – and a husband - I love. So if you are thinking about making a major life change, don't let fear get in your way. Roll the dice on yourself. If you aren't willing to gamble on you, who else will?"

## Public Health Associate Program



In October 2017, the Macomb County Health Department (MCHD) began a new chapter as a host site for Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Public

Health Associate Program (PHAP). The PHAP program is a competitive, two-year, paid training program in which early-career public health professionals who have a recent bachelor's or master's degree and an interest in public health service are placed with local, state or non-governmental agencies for work assignments. Not only does PHAP provide early career professionals with hands-on work experience, it provides host agencies capacity building and additional work force to

## News Nook

03/19/18 - [Macomb County launches tool to track conditions and costs of primary roads](#)

03/16/18 - [Macomb County MSU Extension offers R.E.L.A.X. Alternatives to Anger](#)

02/27/18 - [Macomb Business Awards winners announced](#)

fill gaps in programs and address staffing shortages. The process to become an associate with PHAP, and the process to become a host site both include competitive applications and interviews for associates and host sites.

MCHD is hosting three PHAP analysts for two years. Each is working on a unique project at the department and are integrated into current programs and staffing. All three analysts are new to Michigan and Macomb County. They were asked a little about their experiences in Michigan.

### **Mirissa Bosch (Anacortes, Washington) B.S. in Public Health from the University of Washington**

Mirissa is working in Health Planning and tasked with working the department epidemiologist on reducing the opioid epidemic including mapping drug use and overdose rates, developing and implementing a surveillance system, leading community focus groups and assisting with prevention efforts.

#### **What is your impression of Michigan?**

"I honestly had no idea what to expect before I arrived, but I have been pleased by my experiences so far. Driving here was an adjustment—the roads are huge and everyone drives pretty fast. The weather has also been an exciting factor in my move. I never thought I would get to point where 30 degrees sounds warm. Overall, my impressions of the state have been really positive, and I look forward to continuing to explore."

### **Ifeoma Echeazu (Chicago, Illinois) M.S. in Public Health from Northern Illinois University**

Ifeoma is working on increasing the breastfeeding rates in Macomb County with a focus on WIC and is assigned to the WIC office in Clinton Township. This project will include conducting focus groups and distributing surveys to mothers, healthcare professionals, and WIC staff in order to gain an understanding of the perception of breastfeeding as well as the barriers and challenges to initiating and sustaining it. The results from the focus groups and surveys will be used to improve community engagement and to recommend policy changes to increase breastfeeding rates and duration rates in Macomb County.

#### **What is your impression of Michigan?**

"My first impression was: "Where can I make a quick U-turn?" It took me some time to get used to the 'Michigan Left', as some people call it, but it has grown on me. I also wondered why there was always construction work being done everywhere. Although this was true, the flow of traffic was never as bad as traffic in Chicago!"

"Having Ifeoma here to help us sort out ways we can better serve the community is an amazing opportunity; she can do the 'deep dive' that we just never have the time to do ourselves. It's also wonderful to have a chance to mentor a future leader in public health." - Martha Brooks, Program Coordinator WIC

### **Emily Norton (Lexington, Kentucky) B.S. in Public Health from the University of Kentucky.**

Over the next two years, Emily will be working to reduce chronic disease in Macomb County through the implementation of the Health Department's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) with the Health Planning team. Chronic Disease and Healthy Lifestyle is a priority area in the CHIP because 3 health behaviors (smoking, poor diet, and lack of physical activity) lead to 4 chronic diseases (Cancer, Cardiovascular Disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, and Type 2 Diabetes) that cause 50% of deaths in Macomb County.

#### **What is your impression of Michigan?**

"Prior to apartment hunting in September, I had never been to the state. However, I am happy to say that I am really enjoying all that Michigan has to offer. I've been able to explore downtown Detroit and Ann Arbor, shopped at Eastern Market, made a trip to Frankenmuth during the holidays, and went to a Red Wings game in the new arena."

"Emily and Mirissa have been excellent additions to our department, team and Health Planning program. They both come with fresh ideas about public health and how to make positive changes in the current health status of our community members. Having them here has helped us to really start digging deeper into

public health topics (chronic disease, social determinants of health, access to services, and opiate reduction). It is very rewarding to be able to mentor future public health professionals and provide them the opportunity to experience so many different aspects of public health." - Whitney Litzner, Planning and Quality Assurance Manager

MCHD looks forward to the next two years with the PHAP program and the associates and is exploring options to expand the use of the program into other areas of the department in future application cycles.

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## Volunteers Needed for Wellness Warriors



HealthStyles is looking for employees who would like to join Macomb County's wellness committee. The committee's mission is to promote a culture of wellness within their departments. These "Wellness Warriors" serve as the point of contact for their co-workers when it comes to providing information about current and upcoming programs, such as Lunch and Learns, and the popular Macomb County Employees' Health Fair. Wellness Warriors must attend monthly

HealthStyles committee meetings, communicate the HealthStyles programs and learning opportunities to their co-workers, assist the committee with coordination of HealthStyles programs and projects, and lead by example to promote a healthy and active life style.

Interested employees may apply for membership on the Committee by completing an [application](#). Your supervisor must approve your application. When you have your application completed and approved, you may email it to [healthstyles@macombgov.org](mailto:healthstyles@macombgov.org).

If you aren't able to join the committee, you can contribute in other ways. First and foremost, you can take advantage of as many HealthStyles programs as you can, and do your best to maintain a healthy work-life balance, for your own sake. Second, the HealthStyles committee always welcomes new ideas for programs and initiatives. Please email your suggestions to [healthstyles@macombgov.org](mailto:healthstyles@macombgov.org). Any topic that contributes in some way to a healthy work-life balance has the potential to be incorporated into a HealthStyles program, so be creative! From yoga classes to cooking demonstrations, the HealthStyles committee is open to hearing your ideas!

Finally – Save the Date!!!! The annual Health Fair is scheduled for August 8. More details to follow as the date approaches.

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## It's tax preparation time!

The 2017 tax season is now open. If you're filing online or in person, the Macomb County Perks at Work Tax Information Center can help you meet the April 17th deadline.

Perks at Work can help with exclusive offers from H&R Block Online, TurboTax, TaxAct and TaxSlayer. The following discounts are currently available:

- H&R Block Online: Save 35% on tax preparation fees; 20% off tax preparation software
- Liberty Tax Services: Save 20% on online tax filing
- Tax Act: Save up to 40% on online tax filing
- TaxSlayer: Earn 1,000 WOWpoints on online tax filing
- Tax Act: Save up to 40% on online tax filing
- TurboTax Online: Save \$20 on online tax preparation software

These offers are only available through the Perks at Work website: <https://www.perksatwork.com/taxcenter/index/categoryId/138>

Not a member yet? Go to [www.perksatwork.com](http://www.perksatwork.com) to register and have full access to all available discounts.

If you have any questions regarding the Perks at Work program or know a local business who wants to participate please e-mail Robyn DiCristofaro at [robyn.dicristofaro@macombgov.org](mailto:robyn.dicristofaro@macombgov.org) or Cindy Genord at [cindy.genord@macombgov.org](mailto:cindy.genord@macombgov.org).

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## Sprint and Splash Returns in June



Now entering its seventh year, the annual [Sprint and Splash Festival of Races](#) is a great way to be active and experience one of Macomb County's most beautiful natural assets! Held on Saturday, June 16 at Lake St. Clair Metropark, Sprint and Splash includes a variety of fun or competitive events, as well as music, food, craft beer and local vendors. For a limited time, we are offering an employee discount for early-bird registration.

Sprint and Splash is for people of all ages and abilities. Whether you are just beginning to run or you are a serious athlete looking for a challenge, this event offers something for everyone. All participants receive a SWAG bag full of goodies, race shirt and finisher medal. Events include:

- [5K Run or Walk](#)
- [Duathlon: 5K Run + 2-Mile Paddle \(participants may use a kayak or stand-up paddleboard\). This can be completed individually or as a relay team.](#)
- [2-Mile Paddle \(participants may use a kayak or stand-up paddleboard\)](#)
- [6-Mile Sanctioned Stand-up Paddleboard](#)

After your event, join everyone at the Beach Village for a free breakfast. There will be a DJ spinning tunes and craft beers and hard cider for sale. Sponsors and vendors will set up in Exhibitor Row where you can pick up information about their services or purchase cool stuff. The morning ends with an awards ceremony for those who place in each event.

Sprint and Splash is organized by the Department of Planning and Economic Development as part of the Blue Economy Initiative. Aside from creating a signature event that draws visitors to the community, the event also raises funds for two special organizations.

This year, proceeds will be shared with the [Huron-Clinton Metroparks Foundation](#) and [the Clinton River Watershed Council](#). Your participation will help to support the Metroparks across the region as well as programs to protect the Lake St. Clair, the Clinton River and its tributaries.

Registration is required. Sprint and Splash is pleased to offer a 15% discount to all Macomb County employees who register by [April 9](#).

Visit [www.SprintandSplash.com](http://www.SprintandSplash.com) and enter the code MacombEmployee2018 when prompted.

For questions about the event or to learn more about volunteer or sponsorship information, please contact Amanda Minaudo at [Amanda.Minaudo@macombgov.org](mailto:Amanda.Minaudo@macombgov.org).

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## Take Our Daughters And Sons to Work Day - April 26, 2018

Human Resources and Labor Relations is excited to host another Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work Day on Thursday, April 26, 2018. Designed to be more than a career day, girls and boys are able to experience what a parent or



mentor does during the work day. Last year employees and children alike enjoyed hands-on activities with Public Works, Animal Control, Judge Matthew Switalski, COMTEC, Michigan State University Extension and the Sheriff's Office.

Stayed tuned for more information on how to register online for this event.

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## Hare Today, Abandoned Tomorrow!

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

Rabbits, chicks and ducklings are among the most popular pets this time of year. Unfortunately, they are also some of the most abandoned pets as well, especially after Easter, when the novelty has faded. Rabbits are the third most frequently surrendered animals in shelters. Regrettably, some of these baby animals face a worse fate, when their owners "set them free" to live outside. Many people don't realize that, unlike wild rabbits and ducks, these domesticated species are not equipped to survive on their own. They most likely will starve, or become prey to wild animals.

Rabbits are adorable, especially baby rabbits. It is easy to see why parents may buy them impulsively at this time of year. However, they are not necessarily good pets for children. They are prey animals, easily frightened, and do not always like to be held or cuddled. Ducklings and chicks require special care and attention as well. They prefer to live in flocks - they don't do well alone, and may even "act out" if they are lonely. These animals grow quickly, require special diets, need proper socialization and can have a lengthy lifespan.

I hope you will not misunderstand me ~ these animals can make wonderful companions. But like all animals, they should be brought into a home thoughtfully, after due consideration of the time and long term commitment it takes to be a responsible pet owner. Also, please be advised that the State of Michigan regulates the sales of baby chicks, rabbits and ducklings. Specifically, per Act 163, paragraph 752.91, section 1, it is unlawful to sell or offer for sale these animals if they have been dyed or artificially colored, so beware of anyone offering these types of altered animals. And don't forget - chickens and ducks may be considered farm animals in your community, and therefore, there may be special ordinances that govern their ownership.

Clearly, if you are considering a rabbit, chick or duck for a pet, it would be wise to research all of the implications before you bring one home. If you are considering adding a pet to your family, please "Adopt! Don't Shop!" There are many loveable animals who are willing and able to bring years of joy to your home. You can find many animals (cats, dogs, rabbits, birds, etc.) who need a home at [Petfinder.com](http://Petfinder.com), and you are always welcome to visit us on Dunham Road!

Have a great Easter weekend!

Sincerely,

Chief Randazzo

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## Celebrating Macomb's bicentennial

Macomb County turns 200 this year, and there are opportunities to celebrate all year long! Learn fun facts about the county's history through the [Macomb200.org](http://Macomb200.org) website. Scroll along the timeline to see when important events occurred, and visit the stories page to read blogs about historical people, places and events. This month features stories about communities. Next month will focus on health.

Delve into the county's historical sites through the [Passport Challenge](#). Pick up a passport at participating locations and earn stamps at each site you visit. Once you've collected seven stamps, take your passport to [Culver's](#) for a free meal.

An historical exhibit entitled "Voyageurs to Swing Votes" will be on display [Feb. 28 through May 6](#) at [Macomb Community College's Lorenzo Cultural Center](#). According to their website, it will feature "major accomplishments, significant milestones, key people and interesting facts that have made Macomb County what it is today." Also look for a new exhibit to make its way to the County Administration Building lobby sometime before spring.

The city of Mount Clemens also turns 200 this year, and a new commemorative book has been released. [Capital of Macomb: A Bicentennial History of Mount Clemens, Michigan, 1818-2018](#) by Deborah Larsen includes beautiful images and details significant events that have shaped the city over the years. It is available for purchase for \$15 at the [Mount Clemens Public Library](#) checkout desk.

The signature event of the year will be a torch relay which will take place June 21 and 22. The relay will run through each of Macomb's 27 communities and end in Mount Clemens in time for their annual fireworks extravaganza. The following day, June 23, there will be a Bootleggers Ball that draws inspiration from the prohibition era.



Finally, the bicentennial will be celebrated during some of our communities' longest running traditions: their annual parades. The bicentennial float can be spotted in the St. Clair

Shores Memorial Day Parade, Romeo Labor Day Parade and Mount Clemens Presents Macomb County's Santa Parade on Nov. 17.

For more details about all of these events, follow [@Macomb200](#) on Facebook.

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## April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

### By Macomb County Human Resources and Labor Relations

Macomb County has implemented and updated its Driver Safety policy, which can be found at [HRLR Policies](#). Since April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month, please pause and take a moment to consider safe driving habits.

Distracted driving continues to be the primary reason for motor vehicle crashes in the United States. In 2015, 3,477 people were killed and 391,000 people were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers. Distracted driving is defined as any activity that takes drivers' eyes off the road, hands off the wheel, or minds off the primary task of driving safely. It is any activity that potentially endangers the driver, passengers, other drivers and pedestrians.

Texting while driving has become notorious for causing accidents and injuries. The average time a person's eyes are off the road while texting is five seconds. At 55 miles per hour, a vehicle will cover the length of a football field in those few seconds. There are many ways to eliminate the cell or smart phone as a potential distraction. Some drivers zip their phones securely in their purse or briefcase before turning on their vehicle. Others turn their devices on silent. And - as with many things - "There's an app for that!" Many of these apps are free, such as

AT&T's "DriveMode" and "TrueMotion." These apps have been reviewed online as being user friendly and easily installed on your phone. Users can turn on the apps manually each time they get in the car, or set the apps to turn on automatically when the device detects it is moving at a speed consistent with driving. For people with teen drivers in their families, these apps will send alerts if the teen disables the app. This is a reassuring feature to many parents, since drivers ages 15 to 19 years old have the largest proportion of drivers who were distracted at the time of their crashes. In fact, ten percent of all 15 to 19 year olds involved in fatal crashes were reported to be distracted.

Texting isn't the only source of distraction. Eating, changing the radio station, personal grooming, talking, navigating gps equipment and daydreaming are other sources. All drivers should be very conscious of any habits that could take their mind off of the task of driving safely. Macomb County expects all of its employees to engage in safe driving habits while conducting County business, and strongly encourages its employees to maintain safe driving habits at all times.

For more information regarding distracted driving, please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website at <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/distracted-driving>.

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## Veggie Skillet Hash

### Ingredients

- 1 tsp Olive Oil
- 1 large Onion, diced
- 1 Red Bell Pepper, diced
- 3 (or more) cloves Garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon dry rosemary or 1 tablespoon fresh
- ½ teaspoon dry or 1 tablespoon fresh Thyme leaves
- 5-6 Red Skin Potatoes, diced OR shredded
- 1 medium Sweet Potato, diced or shredded
- 1 (15 oz) can Cannellini Beans, drained & rinsed
- 1 (15 oz) can Tomatoes
- 2 cups Kale or Spinach



### Directions:

- Sauté the oil, onion, and red bell pepper over medium.
- Add the garlic, herbs, diced potatoes, tomatoes, and rinsed beans to cook nice and slowly until potatoes are fork-tender, approximately 15-20 minutes. Don't rush this!
- Add kale/spinach and seasonings. Continue to cook for about 5 minutes until the spinach/kale wilts.

### Chef Notes:

- Add more of your favorite vegetables such as zucchini, summer squash, cauliflower or broccoli to boost nutrition and flavor.
- Couple with scrambled eggs for a nice, hearty breakfast!

