

## Employers Leading the Path to Change the Landscape of D&I:

*Talent 2025's Diversity and Inclusion Program (Rev. 06.02.2021)*

### **IT IS TIME TO ACT**

*We invite you to join us in this moment to further the movement.*

Current events have reinforced that systemic injustice in the community and workplace are real and ongoing, both in our region and across the United States. The heightened awareness of inequity has created a sense of urgency and new energy to act. Talent 2025 recognizes the role employers can and should play in being part of the solution to move our region forward. Over the last six years, we have been working to drive change in the business community as it relates to increasing workforce diversity and inclusion (D&I) to lead to more equitable outcomes.

### **BACKGROUND**

Founded in 2010, [Talent 2025](#) is a catalyst working to ensure an ongoing supply of world-class talent for West Michigan. Composed of over 100 CEOs from the region, Talent 2025 illuminates gaps, evaluates leading practices, and advocates for the implementation of those leading practices to make West Michigan a top 20 employment region by the year 2025. Talent 2025 serves 13 counties in West Michigan, embracing the industries, businesses, and educational institutions of each county. We convene stakeholders from each of these sectors and facilitate an efficient collaboration that integrates resources, streamlines processes, and leverages energies to address the talent demand needs of each sector.

To be a top 20 region for employment, West Michigan employers must attract, develop, and retain diverse talent. Despite numerous community efforts, West Michigan's lack of diversity and significant education and economic disparities persist and create challenges for employers seeking to recruit and retain diverse talent to and within the region. In 2015, our [Inclusion Interviews Report](#) provided data to confirm this. In 2016, Talent 2025 convened a group of leaders from top area employers to identify a framework for helping accelerate workforce diversity and inclusion efforts in the region.

In 2017, after extensive research, this work culminated in a four-part program that empowers participating employers to advance D&I within their individual organizations and region. The program contains four steps, each designed to work together.

## FOUR SIMPLE STEPS TO ENGAGE

### **Step 1: Signing a CEO Commitment**

*The pledge is a way to publicly demonstrate your company's commitment to this movement and identify the specific methods to move your organization forward.*

Currently over 80 CEOs, have signed our [pledge](#) to publicly demonstrate their commitment to advancing workforce D&I in West Michigan. The pledge contains action-oriented activities for CEOs, Human Resource leaders, and Diversity leaders.

### **Step 2: Measure Progress by Completing an Annual Benchmark Survey**

*The survey tool provides employers with confidential baseline data to better understand your organization's current state from a demographic and cultural perspective.*

In addition to the confidential baseline data provided to employers, the survey also offers confidential aggregate data from all survey respondents that can help us measure and report regional progress over time. The survey measures two key areas.

- a) Demographics: This includes the gender and racial diversity of your workforce, leadership, and board.
- b) Cultural: The implementation of best practices that contribute to building an inclusive culture.

Employers have found the tool helpful for strategic planning and incorporating D&I into various functions of their business. The survey is administered by [Calvin University](#) and based on [Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World](#). On average, the electronic survey takes one hour to complete if you have the requested data readily available. Please allow for additional time to collect demographic data, discuss your responses with various internal stakeholders and debrief your individual scores after.

### **Step 3: Utilize Leading Practices to Drive Improvement**

*Utilize PIVOT, a toolkit that provides access to real world leading practices, regardless of your starting point.*

[PIVOT](#) is segmented into 15 categories that directly align with the benchmark survey. It contains resources and leading practices for both informational and implementation purposes for small, medium, and large companies across all industry sectors. PIVOT also contains a list of [DE&I vendors](#) who offer implicit bias training, consulting support, and training on various other topics.

## **Step 4: Build D&I Champions in your organization.**

*Engage in activities and events that help you, your leaders, and staff become equipped with the knowledge and skills to lead this important work.*

Opportunities include small intimate roundtable meetings and large scale [Inclusive Leadership Development Events](#) on various D&I topics. These events allow CEOs, Executive business leaders, HR Leaders, and D&I leaders to convene while learning from subject matter experts, community partners, and other peer professionals. Since the initiative launched in 2018, we have brought in two nationally recognized keynote speakers and convened over 500+ leaders from 100+ companies throughout West Michigan. Four-six events are hosted per year and are on average 1.5 hours in length.

### **BENEFITS**

1. **Collective Impact:** Public recognition on Talent 2025s [Committed Employer Map, website](#) and other public correspondence as one of the innovative employers committed to positively impacting D&I in the region.
2. **Benchmark Survey:** Access to an annual electronic benchmark survey that can be used to assess your company's current state measuring demographic data and the implementation of best practices that support an inclusive culture.
3. **Confidential Reports:** Access to a confidential benchmark survey reports that can be used for strategic planning.
4. **Employer Toolkit:** Access to [PIVOT](#), an online employer toolkit sharing resources and leading practices curated by West Michigan's leading employers and national best practices. Your company could also be featured on PIVOT if you submit leading practices proven to drive change.
5. **Professional Network:** Expand your professional network by engaging with other Human Resource and Diversity leaders through quarterly roundtable meetings. Access to Talent 2025's D&I liaison.
6. **Exclusive Event Invitations:** Invitations and reduced pricing for exclusive leadership development events.

### **PROGRAM INVESTMENT**

Talent 2025 members in good standing may participate at no additional cost. Non-member organizations are invited to participate under the following cost structure.

Annual Participation Fee	Organization Size	Employee Count
\$250	Micro	Fewer than 100
\$500	Small	101- 250
\$1,250	Medium	251-1000
\$2,500	Large	1001+
A 20% discount is available for non-profit organizations, government entities, and public K-12 school systems.		

Learn more about [Talent 2025](#). Questions and D&I membership inquires can be directed to Whitney White, [w.white@talent2025.org](mailto:w.white@talent2025.org).