



# Innovation Center

**2025 ANNUAL REPORT**  
(July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)

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# WHAT WE DO

The Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine (WMed) Innovation Center is Kalamazoo's technology entrepreneurship hub. With an abundance of wet labs, engineering labs, private offices, shared equipment, and two unique co-working programs, the Innovation Center is the perfect home for any technology company. For those who don't need physical space yet, the numerous training programs, networking opportunities, and workshops are ideal.

Since 2003 our 69,000 square foot building has been a vital component of the Kalamazoo entrepreneurial community, hosting networking events and providing meeting space for various activities. The Innovation Center is also the Kalamazoo SmartZone, a state-designated area where technology-based firms locate in close proximity to all of the community assets that assist in their endeavors. Through the SmartZone, high-tech startups can access numerous programs including the Business Accelerator Fund, the Emerging Technologies Fund, and the MI-STEM Forward Internship Program.

The Innovation Center collaborates with many other local and regional support organizations such as the Small Business Development Center, SCORE, the WMU Starting Gate, the City of Kalamazoo, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and more. If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes an entire ecosystem to raise a startup. Here in the pages of our annual report you will learn about what makes the Innovation Center special.

### TOGETHER WE COMMERCIALIZE.



“A dynamic space where professionals from different companies share the same roof, fostering a like-minded and inspiring environment.”



# What Motivates Us



# OUR TEAM



**SANDRA COCHRANE, MBA, Assistant Dean for the Innovation Center.** Sandra coordinates and oversees all activities at the Innovation Center in support of entrepreneurship and commercialization, including technology transfer for the medical school. Her work at WMed focuses on growing the Innovation Center into a hub for burgeoning life science, technology, and engineering companies. She serves as a reviewer for the National Science Foundation's Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) Program as well as its Partnerships for Innovation (PFI) program. A native of Ann Arbor, Sandra and her family have called Van Buren County home for over 20 years. In addition to holding a National Business Incubator Association's Certificate of Incubator Management, Sandra is a graduate of Michigan State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in English Education and a master's degree in Business Administration.



**MADLYN PINDER, Business Services Manager.** Madelyn has been with the Innovation Center since 2004. As Business Services Manager for the Innovation Center, she serves as the first point of contact for clients and visitors. Madelyn manages the day-to-day business activities of the Innovation Center, receives guests for client companies, and serves as the face of the Innovation Center for everyone who comes to the facility, working to ensure that the Innovation Center is a positive experience for all. Madelyn previously served as Community and Investor Relations Specialist at Southwest Michigan First and participated in the planning and build-out of the Innovation Center. She also gained development experience at Kalamazoo College and as Program Manager for a private foundation. Madelyn completed the National Business Incubator Association's Certificate of Incubator Management in 2010.



**LANDON GRIZZLE, Scientific Equipment Coordinator.** Landon joined the Innovation Center team in September 2023. His primary responsibility is to oversee all of the scientific equipment at the Center, keeping it in proper operating condition and recommending the addition of new equipment as needed. Prior to joining the Innovation Center, Landon was a Quality Operations Laboratory Technician at Pfizer. The knowledge of scientific equipment that he gained at Pfizer made him well-equipped to take on the role of Scientific Equipment Coordinator. Landon earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Sciences from Western Michigan University in 2021.



**SARAH WOOSTER, Accounting Specialist.** Sarah joined the Innovation Center team in February 2025. Sarah has shared job responsibilities between the Innovation Center receiving dock and the WMed Accounting Department. Sarah oversees all loading dock responsibilities, which includes incoming and outgoing packages for Innovation Center clients. She is responsible for ensuring that clients are notified of their incoming packages, catalogs the packages, and maintains communication with clients regarding the temperature sensitivity of the materials. Sarah divides her time between the loading dock and her WMed accounting duties, including travel and expense reports. Sarah was previously employed with Single Source Procurement, a WMed client company, Stewart Sutherland, and Adhesive Templates. In her spare time, Sarah enjoys cooking, baking, learning about food, and spending time with her family.

# OUR PARTNERS & SPONSORS

The Innovation Center is fortunate to have the support of several organizations from across the state of Michigan. These partners and sponsors provide refreshments and snacks for events, content for educational workshops and seminars, and free and reduced cost services to the clients of the Innovation Center. Partners and sponsors enrich our entrepreneurial community.



**MICHIGAN ECONOMIC**  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



## WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

We offer many events, both in-person and virtually, to serve our clients and other entrepreneurs across the state of Michigan.

- **KALAMAZOO VENTURE TUESDAY**
- **MONTHLY CLIENT LUNCHES**
- **NUMEROUS WORKSHOPS**, including SBIR/STTR grant preparation, Running Your Business for a Successful Exit, 1 Million Cups Kalamazoo, and Market Validation Boot Camp
- **VARIOUS COMMUNITY VISITS AND TOURS**, such as the Linden Grove Middle School Technology Club



*Global Ties delegation of Japanese research security professionals*



*A meeting of 1 Million Cups Kalamazoo*



*A visit with the Linden Grove Middle School Technology Club*

# OUR CLIENTS

- APEX Accelerator
- Earthodic Inc
- Exactica Analytical Services
- Food For Skin
- InnovaPaper Technology
- LifeNet Health
- Kalsec
- Microbiologics
- Next Stage Labs
- MONEYSPRINTER, INC.
- PharmOcular, Inc.
- Proteos, Inc.
- Revision Autonomy
- SafeSense Technologies LLC
- Single Source Procurement
- StatLab Medical Products
- Tarn Biosciences
- Tetra Therapeutics
- Vestaron Corporation
- Videka LLC
- WMU BRCC
- XCell Battery Technology

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## Client Satisfaction Survey Highlights

Every year we ask our clients to evaluate our work. We are proud that our clients report a very high satisfaction rate for the Innovation Center and its staff. The annual client satisfaction survey utilized a **5-point scale**.



“The WMed Innovation Center is an amazing place to be, and I love to interact with everyone that works here! Worth driving 46 miles from Grand Rapids every day!”

# ECONOMIC IMPACT

Nothing speaks to success like the hard numbers. We are proud to report the annual economic impact that the Innovation Center achieved through the efforts of our client companies for the past 12 months (4/1/2024–3/31/2025).

<b>Number of Companies Created</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Number of Companies Expanded</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Number of Companies Served</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Jobs Created (Number of FTEs)</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Average Annual Salary of Jobs Created</b>	<b>\$44,930</b>
<b>Jobs Retained</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Average Annual Salary of Jobs Retained</b>	<b>\$48,860</b>
<b>MEDC Funds Awarded to Companies</b>	<b>\$352,000</b>
<b>SBIR, STTR, and Other Federal Funding</b>	<b>\$391,875</b>
<b>VC/Angel Investment</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>
<b>Bank/Loan</b>	<b>\$54,000</b>
<b>Owner Investment</b>	<b>\$280,860</b>
<b>New Sales (Increase in Revenue)</b>	<b>\$246,948,789</b>
<b>People/Companies Attending Events</b>	<b>627</b>
<b>Patents Applied For</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Issued Patents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Licensing Agreements</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Commercialized Products</b>	<b>12</b>

*Data collected from the annual Innovation Center grant reports to the MEDC, October 2024 and April 2025*



“The Innovation Center is one of a kind. I hope people realize how fortunate we are to have this asset in our community. The staff is exceptional, infrastructure and equipment are continually being updated and improved, and the opportunities for collaboration are unique. Throughout my fairly long career in science, this has been my favorite working environment.”