

Detroit Regional Talent Compact

September 30, 2020

To our fellow Detroiters,

In 2015, the Detroit Drives Degrees Leadership Council set two ambitious goals for our region: 1) increase the number of residents with a postsecondary credential or degree to 60% by 2030 and 2) close the racial equity gap by half in that same time period. Now, we are formalizing these goals into the Detroit Regional Talent Compact, a collective commitment among educational institutions, businesses, philanthropy, and nonprofits to break down barriers to postsecondary educational attainment.

We are proud of the progress made to date. Since setting our goals, we have increased postsecondary attainment by more than three percentage points; received national recognition through designation as a Talent Hub; and our goal was reinforced by Gov. Whitmer's commitment to the same 60% goal for the state of Michigan.

Despite our steps forward, this work could not come at a more critical time. Fewer than half of Detroit's residents hold a postsecondary degree or high-quality credential, but the vast majority—about 88%—of jobs that offer a family sustaining wage in the region require education beyond high school. Economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic will put an even greater strain on the Detroit's economy and talent pipeline. Historical data from the Great Recession suggests that a region's economic recovery is directly linked to its postsecondary attainment rate.

There is still a long way to reach our goals. In 2019, the Detroit Regional Chamber released its inaugural State of Education report that showed leaks in the education pipeline exist at all stages of the education continuum. Of 100 Detroit students who start in the 9th grade, only 57 will go on to enroll in college within 12 months of graduating high school, and only 30 will ultimately earn a postsecondary credential in six years. When disaggregated by race or ethnicity, these disparities are even greater, with Black students completing credentials at half the rates of their White and Asian peers.

If we do not take aggressive action, Detroit will not meet the goals we set five years ago. New analyses conducted for the Chamber in 2020 indicate that, despite good progress over the last few years, Detroit's current trajectory leaves the region six percentage points short of our 60 percent goal in 2030. Further, if the region is going to reduce equity gaps by half, more than 90,000 Black and 15,000 Latinx students will need to earn degrees in the next decade. While Black and Latinx people make up about 27% of the total population in the region, these figures comprise 40% of total credentials needed to meet the overall attainment goal, meaning a disproportionate number of credentials must be awarded to Black and Latinx students in order to achieve both goals.

Altering our trajectory will take a coordinated effort across the region. For this reason, we have developed a Regional Master Plan to lay out a roadmap for the next 10 years. Recognizing the magnitude of change that is needed to meet our goals and that no single institution or organization can tackle it alone, the Detroit Drives Degrees Leadership Council is asking leaders in the region to commit to specific strategies and actions laid out in the regional masterplan, which will serve as the guidepost for the organizational action plans developed as part of the Talent Compact.

As the signatories of the Detroit Regional Talent Compact, we endorse the strategies laid out in this plan and are dedicated to seeing the work through to 2030. We will hold one another accountable to implementing the strategies outlined in the regional master plan, and to driving institutional change through our organizational action plans. And we invite you – as fellow business, education, and community leaders – to join us in the ambitious task of working collectively and systemically to increase our region's postsecondary attainment and reduce our equity gaps.

Co-Chairs, Detroit Drives Degrees Leadership Council

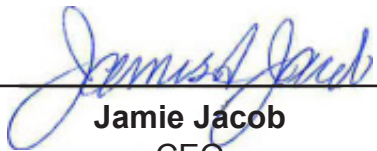


Dick Rassel
Chairman
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Ora Pescovitz
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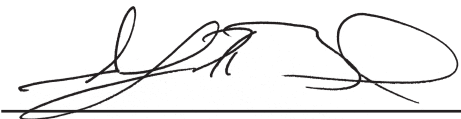
Business Signatories



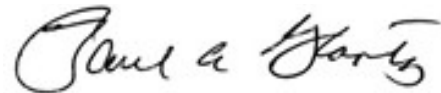
Jamie Jacob
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Patti Poppe
President & CEO
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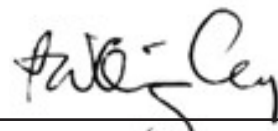
Sandy Baruah
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Paul Glantz
Founder & Chairman
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Henry Ford Health System



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K-12 and Higher Education Signatories



Ralph Bland

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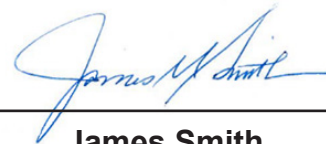
Danielle Jackson

CEO, Detroit 90/90
Detroit Charter High School Collaborative



Nikolai Vitti

Superintendent
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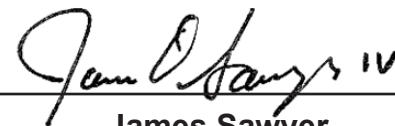
James Smith

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Russell Kavalhuna

President
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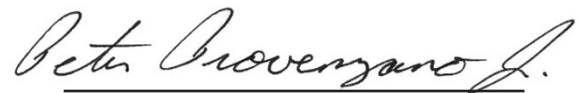
James Sawyer

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Michael DeVault

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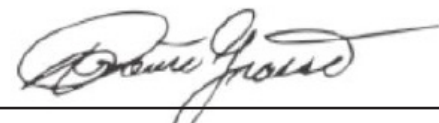
Peter Provenzano

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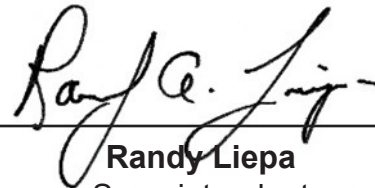


Domenico Grasso

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University of Michigan- Dearborn



Curtis Ivery
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Wayne County Community College

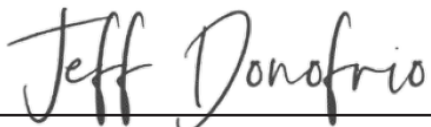


Randy Liepa
Superintendent
Wayne RESA



M. Roy Wilson
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Wayne State University

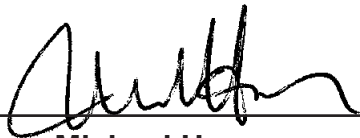
Government, Non-Profit, and Philanthropic Signatories



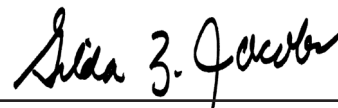
Jeff Donofrio
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Daniel Hurley
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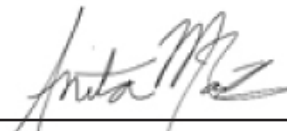
Michael Hansen
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