



# NEWS RELEASE

## *State of the Region 2008*

*For Immediate Release*

*Contact: Greg Northrup, President*

*616-356-6060 Cell: 616-204-0155*

### **[Sidebar]**

#### **Internship Web Portal to Boost Regional Talent Base**

WEST MICHIGAN—April 23, 2008— In addition to the an effort to certify potential employees in the region, the West Michigan Strategic Alliance (WMSA) and its various partners also have plans for a West Michigan Regional Internship Web Portal.

The portal, announced today as part of the 2008 State of the Region meeting, will be designed as a one-stop source for employers to easily access qualified interns from most of the higher education institutions in Michigan.

“The internship portal is part of the strategy for retaining and growing the percentage of West Michigan’s population who are college-educated and between the ages of 25 to 34,” said Greg Northrup, WMSA President. “The goal of the portal is to increase internships in the region by 3,000 in three years.”

WMSA’s Regional Issues Committee examined best practices from around the country and gathered available information as to the statistical effectiveness of several programs. Committee members agreed the expansion of internships provided one of the best methods for retaining and expanding a regional source of employees.

WMSA will be collaborating with businesses, chambers of commerce, colleges and universities in West Michigan. In addition, local leaders plan to work with partners in several regions in Michigan to make the portal part of a state-wide resource. Officials anticipate the site will launch in the fourth quarter of 2008.

#### About the West Michigan Strategic Alliance

The West Michigan Strategic Alliance serves as a catalyst for regional collaboration among the businesses, institutions and governmental units serving 1.3 million people living in a seven county region encompassing the cities of Grand Rapids, Muskegon and Holland. The Alliance works to encourage a regional mindset, which will foster collaboration on critical issues that impact how we live, learn, work and play. Additional information on the Alliance is available at [www.wm-alliance.org](http://www.wm-alliance.org)

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