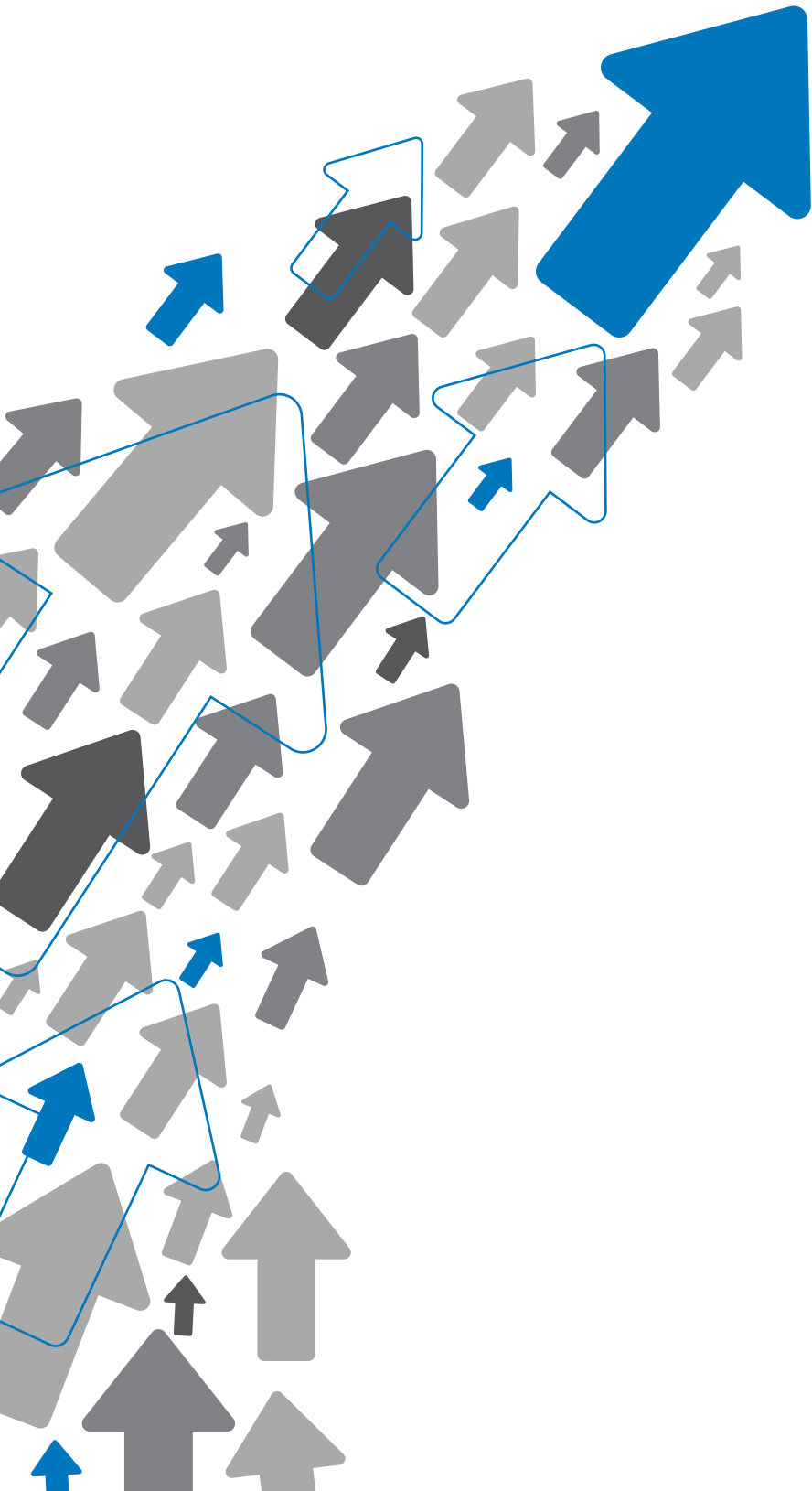


Leading The Way:  
Area Companies Lead Nation In Growth

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE REPORT



LAKESHORE  
**ADVANTAGE**

BUSINESS SERVICES GROUP

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The Lakeshore Advantage Business Intelligence Report is designed to inform our community about our greatest economic asset:

## **EXISTING BUSINESSES**

In 2012, the Lakeshore Advantage team visited more than 200 Holland-Zeeland area CEOs, business owners and top managers, leading to more than 80 projects to support their growth. Fortified by the information collected, the Report fuels the support necessary for area companies to succeed.

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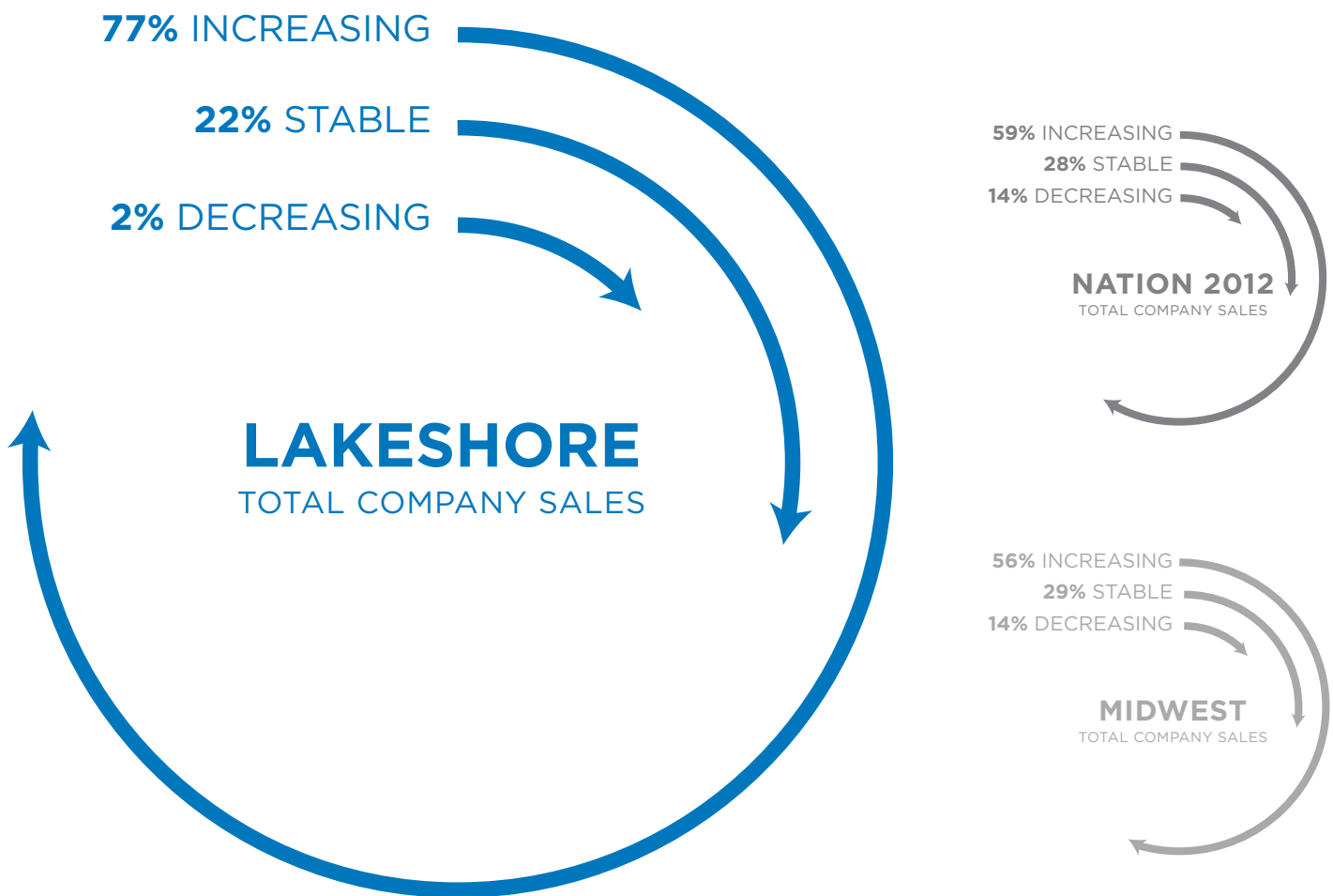
**BRIGHT SPOTS**

# Growth Rates Exceed Both the Midwest and the Nation

The Lakeshore region continues to outpace both the Midwest and nation in sales growth. Over 77 percent of the region report sales gains, against 59 percent in the Midwest and 57 percent for the U.S.

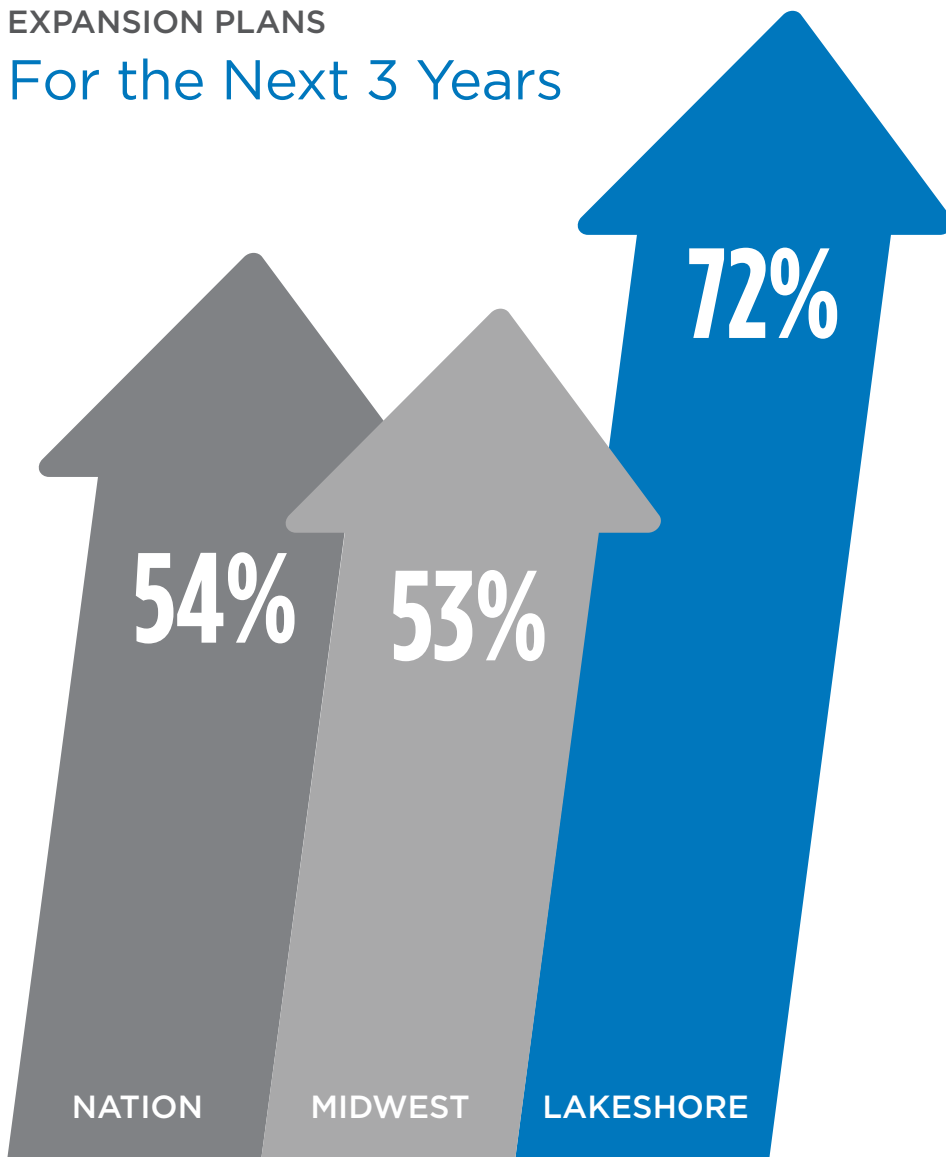
Lakeshore area companies continue to leverage export opportunities, ranking second in the state in Exports as a Share of Total Output.\*

\*Source: Michigan's Urban and Metropolitan Strategy, Brookings Institute, 2012.



## EXPANSION PLANS

### For the Next 3 Years



LAKESHORE AREA COMPANIES PLAN TO EXPAND AT HIGHER RATES THAN EITHER THE MIDWEST OR THE NATION.

72 percent of companies plan to expand in the next three years while only 52 percent in the Midwest and 54 percent in the nation plan to do so.

## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

### Over the Past 5 Years

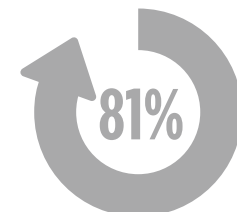
#### NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT LEADS THE WAY FOR CONTINUED GROWTH

Over 86 percent of regional companies have introduced new products in the past five years, compared to 81 percent for the Midwest and 78 percent for the U.S. The greater Holland-Zeeland area reigns as 2nd in Michigan for number of patent applications per capita, nearly double the national average.\*

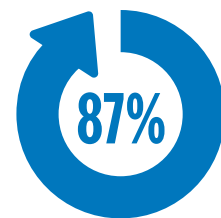
\*Source: Michigan's Urban and Metropolitan Strategy, Brookings Institute, 2012



NATION



MIDWEST



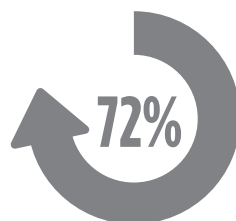
LAKESHORE

## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

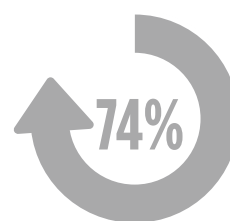
### In the Next 2 Years

#### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT REMAINS EXTREMELY STRONG AS WE LOOK TO THE FUTURE.

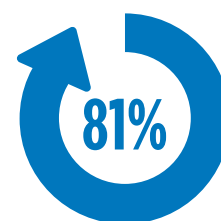
Over 80 percent of area companies anticipate new products in the next two years. The gap closes somewhat as 74 percent of Midwest companies and 72 percent of U.S. companies anticipate new products in the next two years.



NATION



MIDWEST



LAKESHORE

## OPPORTUNITIES

# 2013 Workforce Availability Outlook

### WORKFORCE AVAILABILITY CONTINUES TO BE A CHALLENGE IN 2013.

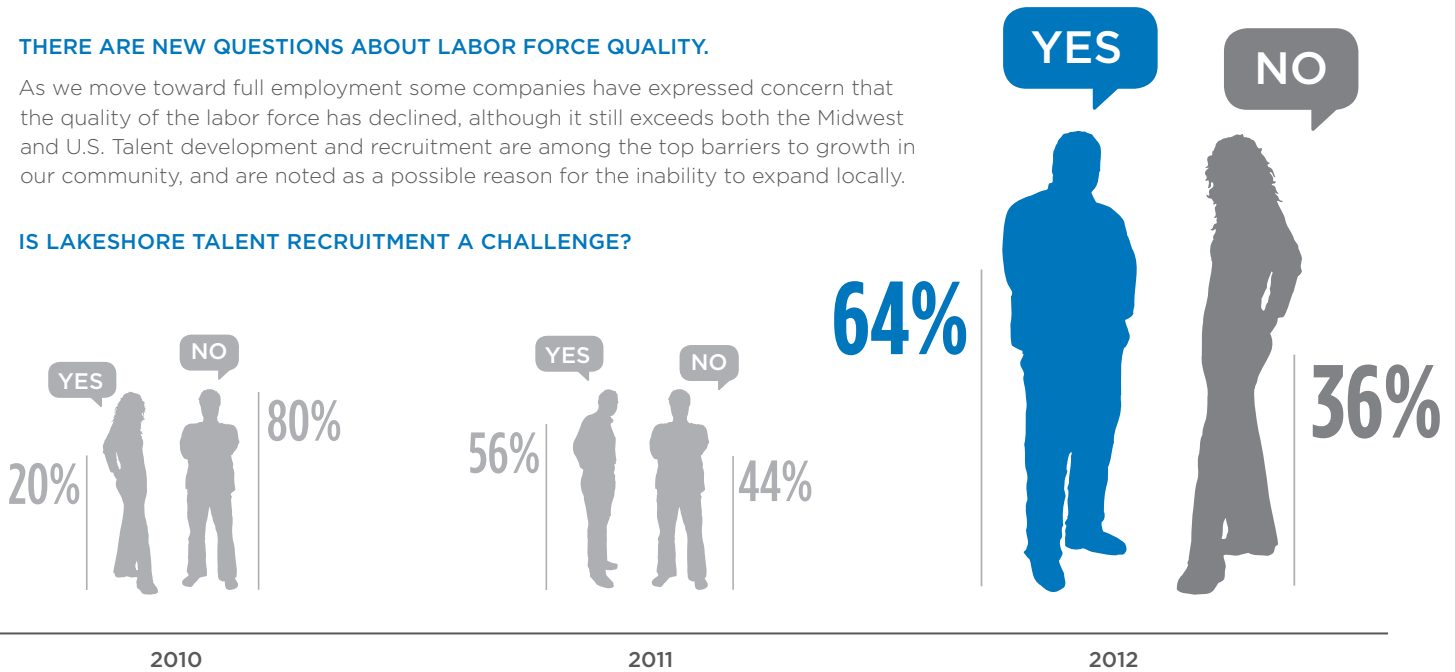
No doubt our low unemployment rate has resulted in a tighter regional employment market. Skilled trades and technical positions are the highest concern. The unemployment rate in Ottawa County, December, 2012 was 6.3 percent, Michigan was 8.9 percent and the U.S. was 7.6 percent.\*

\*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

### THERE ARE NEW QUESTIONS ABOUT LABOR FORCE QUALITY.

As we move toward full employment some companies have expressed concern that the quality of the labor force has declined, although it still exceeds both the Midwest and U.S. Talent development and recruitment are among the top barriers to growth in our community, and are noted as a possible reason for the inability to expand locally.

### IS LAKESHORE TALENT RECRUITMENT A CHALLENGE?



## LAKESHORE ADVANTAGE

# Leading the Way

### BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE LEADS TO SUPPORT FOR AREA COMPANIES

Based on company visits and research, Lakeshore Advantage takes the lead to support growth and address challenges in the region.

The Lakeshore Advantage team is pursuing a variety of initiatives to solve the talent challenges in our community. We are working with our community partners to develop both short-term and long-term talent enhancement strategies. In the short term, watch for new and innovative ways for job seekers to obtain the training needed to pursue a career in manufacturing. To aid long-term talent development, our team will be engaging companies in the area-wide 6th-13th grade Connections Program — a purposeful, coordinated employer-education partnership program.

Our team also maintains relationships with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation as well as other state and federal organizations to evaluate funding, incentives and resources that aid local companies.

The Lakeshore Advantage Business Services Group provides solutions to support the growth of area companies and attract new businesses to the region. The group utilizes a business intelligence system employed by hundreds of communities nationwide to assess and inform the local business community.



## DEDICATED TEAM

# Proven Advantage



Our team has extensive experience in all facets of business operations, and is available to help you. Whether you are looking to expand, need assistance with workforce recruitment, or are looking to find resources to purchase new equipment, our team tailors solutions specific to your company. Contact any of the professionals in the Business Services Group today to set an appointment.

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