

## **MACKINAC ECONOMIC ALLIANCE**

### **Directors Report October 14, 2013**

In concert with EUP College Access Network MEA is working with Mackinac County High Schools and North Central MI College to offer a virtual class to students in St. Ignace, Cedarville and Engadine high schools that count toward credit for NCMC Medical Billing and Coding certification. On 9/24 MEA and EUP CAN sat down with Don Gustafson, St. Ignace Superintendent, to discuss and work out the various considerations to launch this pilot initiative. Following the meeting with Don, Anne and Holly Rohrer spoke with NCMC Associate Dean for Business Health and Technology Pete Olson about next steps needed to offer the first class in January 2014.

On 9/26 before the Mackinac County Commissioners John Kling did a fantastic job of describing MEA accomplishments in 2013, laying out the work plan for 2014. Commissioners received both a proposal narrative and budget and were asked to consider giving \$50K to MEA in 2014. The Commissioners are expected to decide on this request sometime in November. Preliminary indications are favorable that after negotiations MEA will have a contract for the MEA Board to vote on in December.

The fall season was considered the best time for MEA to reach out to various members of the business and civic community on Mackinac Island. With enormous help from Mary Dufina meetings were arranged and conducted with the Grand Hotel (Dan Musser) the Mackinac Island Community Foundation (Robin Dorman) and the Mackinac Island Tourism Bureau (Mary Slevin). Out of these meetings came some concrete recommendations that have potential to engage Mackinac Island businesses more fully in MEA.

MEA continue to support efforts of Jim Durm (Moran Twp.) and his Committee to develop Fr. Marquette Park. Mary Swiderski is actively involved in coordinating efforts and commanding attention of the DNR. At a meeting on October 16<sup>th</sup> at Moran Township Sandra Clark of the DNR and Barbara Brown will discuss important next steps in this broad initiative. Mary will provide our MEA Board details tonight.

On 10/4 Anne Ottaway visited Jim Klarich Economic Development Director of Target Alpena. As the MEA Board heard last June, Jim has introduced some innovative economic development ideas in Alpena that have paid off handsomely. While touring their robust business community, and in discussions afterward, Jim offered some excellent recommendations for Mackinac County. He also was eager to share some of his personal contacts that could help our efforts in Mackinac County. With a regional perspective on economic development in Northern Michigan, Jim supports the idea of greater collaboration between counties.