



FIRST 50 OVERVIEW

2025 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Southwest Michigan First believes that at our community's core, the ultimate catalyst for growth is the ability to identify, engage, and empower the right people. We must take a bold approach to developing the human capital required for a sustainable future for our region.

That's why we created **FIRST 50**: a dynamic mentorship experience designed to connect experienced leaders from across Southwest Michigan with the next generation of changemakers. Through intentional, one-on-one relationships, First 50 is shaping the future by investing in the people who will lead it.

APPLICATION

Space is limited to 25 participants. To apply, please complete the application here: southwestmichiganfirst.com/events/first-50

PROGRAM CONTACT

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Program Structure

First 50 is a leadership development program that combines individualized mentorship with interactive learning sessions. Designed for busy professionals, the program will accelerate your learning with five in-person sessions along with flexible one-on-one meetings with your assigned mentor. All sessions take place at The Catalyst Center.

2025 First 50 Schedule

SEPTEMBER 2025

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MENTEE KICKOFF

Wednesday, September 3

(9 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

NOVEMBER 2025

						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

SESSION 1: MEET & GREET

Wednesday, September 24

(7:30 to 9:00 a.m.)

SESSION 3: EXECUTIVE HABITS

Wednesday, November 19

(9 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

OCTOBER 2025

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SESSION 2: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Monday, October 22

(9 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

JANUARY 2026

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

CLOSING MIXER

Thursday, January 15

(2 to 5:30 p.m.)

FOUR CONNECTION POINTS

Over the course of First 50, we ask that our mentor/mentee pairs touch base a minimum of four times. These sessions should be focused on building the relationship and discussing leadership principles that will accelerate the growth of an emerging leader. The how is up to you. We honor your time and ask that the mentor/mentee pairings work together to find a schedule and a space that work for both. At the meet and greet session, you will receive some helpful hints for maximizing your time together as mentors and mentees.

Southwest Michigan First will:

- Pair you with your individual mentor
- Provide you a framework for growth
- Facilitate learning sessions with relevant and engaging material
- Enrich your professional network

Your mentor will:

- Share their experience and wisdom with you
- Share their relevant network with you
- Expose you to new experiences to support your professional growth

You will:

TIME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend five sessions, including the kickoff, mixers, and closing, along with the four one-on-one meetings with your mentor
TALENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Gallup Strengths assessment • Share your appropriate experiences, challenges, and successes
INVESTMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,500 Non Chamber Members \$1,250 Chamber Members