



KEY INDUSTRY

Manufacturing in Southwest Michigan

In Southwest Michigan, we pride ourselves as being a community famous for its many “firsts” and innovative manufacturing processes.

Checker cabs. Parchment paper. Upjohn’s pharmaceutical pill. Shakespeare Rod & Reel. Gibson Guitars. Stryker’s turning bed frame. Whirlpool washing machines. Kellogg’s Corn Flakes. All were designed and “Made in Southwest Michigan.”

Due to our history of innovation and diversification, today’s design-based products include Eaton Superchargers and Hybrid Power Systems, cereal cartons by Graphic Packaging International, Whirlpool appliances, Parker Aerospace’s hydraulic components, Pfizer pharmaceuticals, Zoetis’ animal care products, food containers by Fabri-Kal, Stryker’s healthcare furniture and surgical instrumentation, and even top-of-the-line outdoor cooking equipment from Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet. A spirit of entrepreneurship and collaboration, a well-educated and skilled workforce and an extensive network of support services available to employers have long been and still are major attractions to manufacturers. Long live innovation. Long live manufacturing.

DID YOU KNOW?



Kalamazoo ranks in the top three places in the U.S. with the **lowest cost of living.**



LinkedIn’s Economic Graphic Research Team named **Kalamazoo** second on its list of **top-12 cities with thriving job markets.**



Personal finance website ranked **Kalamazoo** first on its list of **10 best cities for high salaries and low cost of living.**

- Affordable wage rates averaging \$7.99 to \$19.99 per hour
- Non-union environment with only 6% private union membership
- Key strategic location on NAFTA corridor
- Midpoint between Detroit and Chicago
- BC-CAL-KAL Port of Battle Creek — Foreign-Trade Zone 43
- Western Michigan University’s College of Engineering and Applied Sciences
- Western Michigan University’s Institute for Supply Chain Management ranking as #2
- Center for Advanced Vehicle Design and Simulation (CAViDS) at Western Michigan University
- More than 303,000 college and university students within a 2-hour driving radius
- Academy training for welders, mechatronics, automotive technicians, wind turbine technicians, facilities maintenance technicians and more
- Diverse industrial supplier base
- Readily available and easily accessible public warehousing and contract distribution services
- Skilled workforce of 64,000 currently employed across all sectors which include biopharmaceuticals, automotive, medical device, plastics, metals, tool and die, furniture and food processing

Source: ¹Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor (2017)