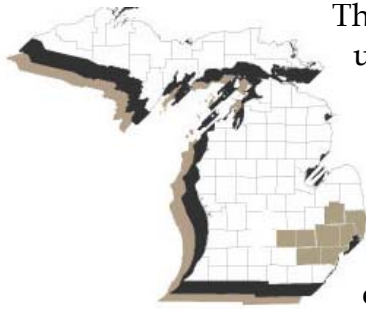


Southeastern Michigan



The Southeastern Michigan Innovation Alliance (SEMIA) is a unique collaborative effort seeking to return the region to prominence as a leader of the world's innovation. The SEMIA region is composed of 9 counties including Detroit, all of which rely heavily on the manufacturing industry as a main source of employment. Because of substantial plant closures and layoffs in recent years, Michigan has experienced increases in unemployment, including the loss of approximately 192,000 manufacturing jobs between 2000 and 2004.

The result of these negative economic trends is a workforce unprepared for the high skill jobs demanded by globally competitive industries. Although Southeastern Michigan is home to a critical mass of highly skilled engineers and other technical workers, it is also home to many adults without the skills and competencies needed to compete in the 21st century innovation economy. Among the most pressing issues facing the region is a low educational attainment rate. According to the Center for Education Performance and Information, Wayne County, the most populous county in Michigan, has the lowest graduation rate and almost double the drop-out rate compared with the state average.

Despite these challenges, there are emerging bright spots in the regional economic picture. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth have both identified opportunities for Michigan's future industrial base in four high growth clusters: advanced manufacturing, life sciences, homeland security and alternative energies.

SEMIA will implement the following strategies as a Second Generation WIRED region:

1. Increase teacher training/student education in math and science programs proven to foster successful completion of related post-secondary programs and create alignment between closely related learning programs.
2. Support K-20 education programming relating to entrepreneurship; infuse best-in-class, hands-on, peer-based learning programs that catalyze interest and real world understanding.
3. Create top-of-the-line training/consultation services for active entrepreneurs, including supportive peer networks.
4. Establish a gap fund for early-stage entrepreneurs.
5. Develop collaborative technology-related attraction and expansion programs that benefit multiple companies.



Recently, the Southeastern Michigan region took a critical step toward regional collaboration through the creation of the One D alliance. The partnership adds support from the Detroit Regional Chamber, Detroit Renaissance and other regional organizations important to SEMIA. The alliance developed six strategies in their report "Road to Renaissance." Among the strategies, the alliance plans to help secure a strong future talent base; a goal shared by the region and the WIRED Initiative.

The implementation of these and other strategies will be overseen by SEMIA and a cadre of growing community partnerships. These partners represent a variety of industries and members from the region's communities, including universities, community colleges, business incubators, financial institutions, economic development agencies, workforce development boards and original equipment manufacturers and suppliers. Participating organizations include the regional Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Michigan's public school employee unions, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments and others. These organizations will work with the region to set priorities to provide mutual support, guidance and resources to help SEMIA transform Southeastern Michigan.