



WORLD TRADE AND THE U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE WEST MICHIGAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

This is what West Michigan businesses have to say about Global Trade & the U.S. Commercial Service:

FOSTER SWIFT

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The U.S. Commercial Service is Uniquely Positioned to take Michigan Small to Medium Sized Businesses from Export Contact to Export Contract. As Chair of the West Michigan District Export Council (DEC) and a trade attorney at Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C., I have seen firsthand how the U.S. Commercial Services (USCS) effectively partners with successful international trade assistance and promotion organizations in our West Michigan community including, but not limited to: Michigan State University's International Business Center, the West Michigan DEC, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Global Business Club of Mid-Michigan, the Van Andel Global Trade Center, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Michigan Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs). Notwithstanding the work of these other organizations, USCS is uniquely positioned to help small and medium-sized business in our region grow and create jobs through exporting. First, the USCS offices undertake the handholding necessary to assist small to medium-sized companies to go from export *contact* to export *contract* – leading to business growth and job creation. Second, USCS offices in U.S. embassies throughout the world are the “boots on the ground” for small to medium-sized businesses, most of which have no foreign country presence. These businesses rely heavily on the in-state CS offices, and those in our embassies abroad, to export their U.S. products, expand and create jobs here at home. - *Jean Shtokal, Attorney, Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, PC, and Chair, West Michigan District Export Council*



CS Helps Grow Leaders with a Drive to Expand Business and Create Jobs through Exporting. As Director of the Global Business Center at Western Michigan University's Haworth College of Business, I can attest that the U.S. Commercial Service (CS) office in Grand Rapids has been extremely helpful to our Michigan region over the years in many different ways. Kendra Kuo and before her, Tom Maguire, along with others in their group at USCS have help organize and offer exporting workshops for small- and medium-sized businesses in the Kalamazoo region, participate in international conferences offering practical advice to potential exporters, and provide much-needed guidance to area companies as the prime “go to” group when small and medium-sized businesses need help with their exporting operations. Just as important for us here at Western Michigan University, USCS has helped prepare our students with international business skills. USCS has helped us grow business students into U.S. business owners and managers of companies that export. As an example, they arrange for us to have experienced international business executives and policymakers come in as speakers for our Global Lecture Series that addresses contemporary issues and developments in global business for small to medium-sized companies and startups. The USCS is truly an invaluable resource for this area! They play a key role in our Michigan region to help us transform business students into business leaders with an appetite

for expanding U.S. businesses and creating jobs through exporting. --*Zack Quraeshi, Professor of Marketing & International Business, Haworth College of Business, Western Michigan University*



The U.S. Commercial Service Helps Grow Export-Related Business for Manufacturing in the Upper Peninsula. As President & CEO of Enstrom Helicopter Corporation, I can verify that the U.S. Commercial Service (USCS) office in Grand Rapids has done an excellent job supporting our efforts to continue to work and grow our exports over the past 2 decades. Kendra Kuo, and previously Tom Maguire, have been instrumental in our ability to reach out and work existing and new programs throughout the years. Through the contacts they provide, facilitating our participation in various programs (like SBA's State Trade Export Promotion (STEP) grant for Trade and Marketing show support), and direct support and promotion of our export related sales, the CS office in Grand Rapids is always there to help. When Enstrom has a question related to export, new territory, or Commerce Department assistance/policies, our first call is to the USCS in Grand Rapids. --*Tracy Biegler, President & CEO, Enstrom Helicopter Corporation*



It's Imperative to keep West Michigan's Doors Open for World Trade! Supply Chain Solutions, Inc., continues to advocate for free enterprise, competitive markets, and rules-based trade and investment as the path to opportunity and prosperity for all. The United States have had years of impressive benefits from trade. Growth and jobs at home depend on our ability to sell American goods and services to the enormous world population that lives outside of our borders. It is well noted that one in four U.S. Manufacturing jobs depend on our exports, and that these workers' wages are 18% higher on average than those of other factory workers. Additionally, one in three acres on American farms is planted for export. American service providers generate nearly \$700 billion in exporting services. Our Foreign Trade Agreements help limit trade barriers that are especially tough on over 300,000 American Small and Mid-Size businesses that account for 98% of all U.S. exports. --*Les Brand, CEO, Supply Chain Solutions*



The local U.S. Commercial Service-Export Assistance Center (USEAC) Grand Rapids, Michigan is a vital community partner. The local U.S. Commercial Service offices are important to the communities where they are located. The Grand Rapids, Michigan Commercial Service office founded West Michigan World Trade Week nearly 32 years ago. The annual event brings together Michigan's international businesses, economic developers, community leaders as well as educators to honor the U.S. Presidents proclamation of World Trade Week. The West Michigan World Trade Week has educated over 3,000 people affecting over 800 businesses as the community comes together to network and hear important topics affecting global sales for Michigan manufactures. As an outreach center of Grand Valley State University, the Van Anel Global Trade Center sees the impact the local U.S. Commercial Service in our community on a regular basis. Since the center began in 1999, we have used the services it provides as an instrumental part of the business trade missions we offer. Van Anel Global Trade Center relies on the C.S. Gold Key services to set in-country meetings for Michigan businesses on our trade missions, as they determine new markets with customers outside the U.S.—*Sonja Johnson, Executive Director, Grand Valley State University's Van Anel Global Trade Center Seidman College of Business*



Prab Manufacturing Has Become A Successful Exporter with Invaluable Assistance From USCS in Grand Rapids, Michigan and USCS in Canada. Prab Manufacturing makes equipment that automates and recycles waste fluids for the metal processing industry. Prab contacted the U.S. Commercial Service (CS) in 2015 to seek assistance in expanding sales of their Wastewater product line to Canada. USCS Grand Rapids counselled Prab's management on best practices and resources available for creating an export strategy in Canada. As a result of these conversations, Prab enlisted the services of USCS Toronto to complete an International Partner Search and received a State of Michigan State Trade Export Promotion (STEP) grant to assist with travel costs. PRAB reported in 2016 that they successfully selected a distributor to represent them from the International Partner Search. They made an initial sale of \$275,000.00 of equipment to Canada and will continue to represent PRAB in future sales. Describing the International Partner Search, Tim Hanna, Managing Director for PRAB Fluid Filtration, stated, ***"I've found the Commercial Service, particularly their offices in Grand Rapids, Michigan and Toronto, Canada to be very helpful and worth our tax dollars. We were very pleased with their matchmaking service."*** In addition to this recent sale in Canada, PRAB sells and manufactures through partnerships in Poland and India. The global presence of PRAB ensures metalworking companies and OEM's of PRAB's ability to support systems worldwide. PRAB's headquarters in Michigan continues to expand as a result of their increased demand both domestically and abroad.



Business Connect, L3C Became Successful Exporter with Customized Market Research Assistance From USCS in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Business Connect, L3C, a Michigan limited liability company, is a Grand Rapids, Michigan, based global distributor of water and solar energy products. It supplies the developing world with U.S. made goods. After effectively working with the U.S. Commercial Service in 2014 in Africa, Business Connect, L3C requested additional market intelligence to help them grow their distribution network in Latin America. By providing Business Connect, L3C with customized market research for the Latin American region, the U.S. Commercial Service (CS) in Grand Rapids helped Business Connect, L3C to evaluate and prioritize Panama as part of its strategic plan. In April 2015, the CS identified and arranged appointments for Business Connect, L3C with high-potential channel partners. As a direct result of these introductions, Business Connect, L3C successfully obtained their objective and signed a new regional distributor in Panama City. The company shipped an initial sale of goods in November 2015, and projected a 10% increase in sales to Panama in 2016. ***"It has been wonderful working with the Commercial Service in our embassies around the world, as well as our local office here in Grand Rapids. Their specialists provided insights, valuable connections, and advanced the marketing of our American-made product in Panama. These exports are providing new jobs both here in the U.S. and for our international distributors."*** The USCS in Grand Rapids will continue to work with Business Connect, L3C to explore business opportunities in other regions of the world.