

**Connecting  
Entrepreneurial  
Communities**



# Conference Guide

**October 3-4, 2018  
Charlevoix, MI USA**



## Welcome to Charlevoix!

**Thank you** for joining us at this year's state-wide Connecting Entrepreneurial Communities conference. We are excited to have you with us, but more importantly we are excited about the enthusiasm each of you bring for entrepreneurship.

Charlevoix has been a wonderful host partner. Please thank them for generously opening their community for this opportunity to explore and learn from one another.

By the end of this conference we hope you make some new friends, catch up with old connections, and pick up exciting ideas that your team can implement in your community when you get home.

Michigan is a great state with a very bright future. A future made bright thanks to the efforts and commitment that entrepreneurs make each and every day. Let's all do what we can help them be successful; our future depends on it!



### Keynote Speakers:

#### **Luther Kurtz, Business Owner, Mayor, Volunteer**

For Luther Kurtz, turning passions into business is business as usual. After falling in love with skydiving, he opened his own skydiving business, eventually moved it to his hometown of Charlevoix, then built the company into a national business in places like Los Angeles, Miami, Phoenix, and Detroit. But the man who has a degree in Aerospace Engineering and law was just getting started. He and his wife bought and refurbished the Charlevoix movie theater, East Park Tavern, and Hillcrest Club Apartments, which provide quality, affordable, year-round housing. Next up was revitalizing a service alley with vacant buildings into a vibrant downtown space, Mercado—with the Cantina and Salad Fork restaurants as well as a salon, second floor apartments, and retail stores. He is the mayor of Charlevoix, the Past President and board member of the Top of Michigan Trails Council, serves on the DDA Board and Charlevoix Serenity House Board, which provides an alcohol and drug-free environment for recovery programs. Luther and his wife live in Charlevoix with their new son, Landon.



### **MSU Extension - CEC Team Members**

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**Visit the CEC Website** to see photos, breakout session presentations from this and past conferences as well as information about next year's CEC conference.

<http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/>



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#### **Jake Manthei, 4th Generation Entrepreneur**

Jake is the CEO of Aster Brands, which licenses proven business opportunities in the concrete manufacturing industry. Aster Brands is the foundation of three licensed brands: Redi-Rock International, Rosetta Hardscapes, and Pole Base. In a nutshell, Aster Brands provide forms, molds, equipment, and support for concrete manufacturers to build or expand their businesses around the world. Jake is a fourth generation entrepreneur and is a partner in the larger Manthei Group in Northern Michigan. Jake's great grandma started a small flower farm that eventually grew into a hardwood veneer and plywood mill, a heavy construction company, a local microbrewery, and several resort RV resorts in addition to Aster Brands. Jake graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in marketing, and he and his wife live in Petoskey with their two daughters.

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# **MSU Extension – State-wide CEC Conference**

**Oct 3-4, 2018 Charlevoix, MI, USA**

## **Schedule “At-A-Glance”**

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### **Wednesday, Oct. 3**

- 10:30am Registration/Check-in open: Charlevoix Public Library  
Lunch (enjoy a box lunch inside or outside, meet other attendees)
- 11:30am – 12:15pm Opening Session -- Charlevoix Public Library  
Welcome and get acquainted  
Keynote speaker
- 12:15 – 12:45pm 30 minute -- Travel (walk) to breakout sessions
- 12:45 – 1:45pm Breakout session 1 (located in various venues around town)
- 1:45 – 2:15pm 30 minute -- Travel (walk) to breakout sessions
- 2:15 – 3:15pm Breakout session 2 (located in various venues around town)
- 3:15 – 3:45pm 30 minute -- Travel (walk) to breakout sessions
- 3:45 – 4:45pm Breakout session 3 (located in various venues around town)
- 4:45 – 5:30pm Break -- Travel (walk) to reception/ networking event
- 5:30 – 7:30pm Reception and Networking Event – Stafford’s Weathervane Restaurant

### **Thursday, Oct 4**

- 7:30am Breakfast at the Charlevoix Farmers Market
- 8:30am – 9:15am Warm-up, Wake-up, Idea Sharing!  
30 Ideas in 30 Minutes
- 9:15 – 9:30am 15 minute -- Travel (walk) to breakout sessions
- 9:30 – 10:30am Breakout session 4 (located in various venues around town)
- 10:30 – 10:45am 15 minute -- Travel (walk) to closing sessions
- 10:45 – 11:15am Keynote Speaker
- 11:15 – 11:30am Final Remarks, wrap-up, evaluations, thank you’s

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