



PMI GREAT LAKES

Baseline Newsletter March 2026

From the President's Desk

Hello PMI Great Lakes Members,

First, I'd like to welcome all our new members. The Chapter is kicking off an initiative that will start at our March 18th event, which I will introduce that evening. (hint in the picture below).

March is one of those months that arrives with the excitement of spring right around the corner and maybe saying goodbye to cold snowy days. As we "spring forward" on Daylight Saving Time, we welcome the start of this new season, and we get a calendar full of moments that remind us why project management matters: people, purpose, planning, and progress.

If the time change has you feeling a little off-balance, you're not alone—but project managers are uniquely equipped to turn disruption into direction. "Spring forward" doesn't have to mean "push harder." It can mean "plan smarter."

The month of March brings us many interesting things to celebrate:

If you haven't already, take time to celebrate and recognize the women you work with every day, since on March 8th we celebrated International Women's Day. Maybe take an action to thank a colleague that has inspired you as you've progressed in your project management profession.

Fun days in March include Pi Day on March 14th, St. Patrick's Day on March 17th, first day of Spring on March 20th and World Water Day on March 22nd.

March is a great month to lead with intention rather than intensity. If you're feeling stretched, focus on what project managers do best:

- **Reconfirm the objective:** What does "success" mean this month?
- **Reduce friction:** What's one blocker you can remove for your team?
- **Communicate simply:** What are the next two decisions that must be made?
- **Protect energy:** Where can you trade speed for sustainability without losing outcomes?

Don't forget to join us for our exciting chapter events that are highlighted in both this newsletter and on our website.

Thank you,

LeighAnne Martin
President, PMI Great Lakes Chapter
president@pmiglc.net



Volunteer Spotlight

PMI Great Lakes Chapter is pleased to welcome a new volunteer this month:

Neeloshan Selvaraj - Mentor Manager

Neeloshan is a Senior automotive professional with 21+ years of experience across Software Engineering, Systems Engineering, and Program Management, specializing in Automotive Electronic Control Units (ECUs). Proven leader in building high performing teams and successfully driving programs from pre-award through production launch and post-launch.

He holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering (University of Windsor), and a master's degree in electrical engineering (Wayne State University), and PMP certification (2016). He has been an active PMI mentor for the past two years through PMI Great Lakes Chapter.

Welcome Neeloshan!





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“Understanding PMI Infinity” (AND PMI CERTIFICATIONS)



17
March
2026

Lunch & Learn

- * Introduction of PMI Infinity
- * Highlighting Key Functionality of PMI Infinity (Demo)
- * Strengths and Limitations
- * Separate Topic: PMI Certifications

\$15 - Members
\$20 - Non-Members

**REGISTER
NOW**

PMI 2026 Spring Symposium: Implementing AI in a Project Management World

Join us for the 2026 Spring Symposium on April 17, 2026, at the Vibe Credit Union Showplace (fka Suburban Collection Showplace) in Novi, MI, where professionals from across industries will gather to explore how artificial intelligence is transforming project management.

This year's theme, Implementing AI in a Project Management World, will highlight practical strategies, leadership insights, and emerging tools that help project managers navigate an AI-driven future. With keynote speaker Princess Castleberry (along with breakout speakers), engaging discussions, and valuable networking opportunities, this symposium will equip attendees with the knowledge and connections needed to lead successfully in today's evolving business environment.

🎥 Watch the Fireside Chat as we discuss Spring Symposium with Princess Castleberry, this year's keynote speaker!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9QIydeFX1c>

Register here: <https://pmiglc.org/login?eventId=44816>



SCAM ALERT

Scam of the Month

IRS Warns of Escalating Tax Scams as Filing Season Opens

The IRS has issued an updated alert warning taxpayers about a surge in scams targeting individuals, businesses, seniors, and charitable donors. As criminals adopt more sophisticated tactics, the agency emphasizes that misinformation, impersonation, and fraudulent refund schemes remain among the most persistent threats during tax season.

Key Warning Signs of Fraud

Scammers frequently impersonate IRS officials, promise unrealistic refunds, or pressure victims into immediate action. The IRS highlights several red flags:

- Unrealistic refund promises promoted through social media or unqualified tax preparers.
- Threatening messages claiming arrest, deportation, or license revocation unless payment is made.
- Fake websites and links designed to steal personal or financial information.
- Requests for unusual payment methods, such as gift cards or cryptocurrency.

The agency stresses that it does not initiate contact through text, email, or social media, and legitimate interactions typically begin with a mailed letter.

Major Scam Categories Identified by the IRS

- Fake charities: Fraudsters exploit disasters or crises to solicit donations, often using names similar to legitimate organizations.
- Pandemic-related schemes: Criminals continue to misuse programs like the Employee Retention Credit, encouraging false claims that can lead to audits or penalties.
- Refund and credit misinformation: Scams involving clean energy credits, fuel tax credits, and sick/family leave credits often rely on falsified documents or exaggerated claims.
- Disaster-related fraud: Scammers pose as IRS agents offering to help file casualty loss claims after storms, fires, or other emergencies.
- Dishonest tax preparers: Warning signs include refusing to sign returns, charging fees based on refund size, or diverting refunds to their own accounts.
- Phishing and smishing: Emails and texts impersonating the IRS attempt to steal data or install malware.

- Scams targeting seniors: Older adults are pressured to share personal information or withdraw retirement funds under false pretenses.
- Social media tax myths: Influencers may promote nonexistent credits or encourage falsifying W-2s or other forms.
- Tax debt relief scams: Companies promise to settle tax debt for extremely low amounts while charging high upfront fees.
- Unclaimed refund scams: Fake mailings claim taxpayers are owed money and request bank details or ID photos.
- Unemployment identity theft: Criminals file fraudulent unemployment claims using stolen identities, leaving victims with unexpected taxable income.
- W-2 fraud: Scammers target payroll departments to steal employee wage data and file fraudulent returns.

How the IRS Actually Contacts Taxpayers

Understanding legitimate IRS communication methods is one of the most effective defenses against impersonation:

- Initial contact almost always comes by mail, not by phone, text, or email.
- The IRS never demands immediate payment or uses threats.
- Payments are not requested through gift cards, wire transfers, or cryptocurrency.
- Taxpayers have the right to question or appeal any amount the IRS says they owe.

Steps Taxpayers Should Take

The IRS encourages taxpayers to protect themselves by:

- Verifying charities before donating.
- Using reputable, credentialed tax preparers.
- Reporting suspicious messages or fraud attempts.
- Reviewing their IRS online account for unusual activity.
- Acting quickly if they suspect identity theft or fraudulent filings.

SCAM ALERT

Project Management Community Day of Service

What is it?

The Project Management Community Day of Service (PMCDoS) is a service event where experienced project managers provide pro bono project management services to local nonprofits.

This is an extremely high-impact and meaningful way for project managers to give back to the community.

When: Saturday, April 25, 2026

Where: CMU Troy Campus

Time: 8:00am – 5:00pm (breakfast and lunch provided)

How does it work?

Each nonprofit is paired with a team of experienced project managers. The group meets a couple of times prior to the day of the event to discuss the project and get to know one another. On the day of the event, they work through the details to finalize the documents, and the nonprofit leaves with an actionable plan.

What types of nonprofits are eligible to participate?

PMCDoS attracts a wide variety of nonprofits from multiple sectors, including:

- Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders
- Youth Development and Agricultural
- Foreign Affairs and National Security
- Art, Culture, Education
- General and Rehabilitative, Community Health Systems
- Veterans Support
- Public & Social Benefit



**2026 Community
Day of Service**



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Join us in Giving Back to the Community
and help create a brighter future!



We are currently talking with two nonprofits for this event:

Black Legacy Advancement Coalition (BLAC) - a movement that builds Black power by providing education and resources to uplift our communities.

Birdies Book Mobile - a non-profit organization committed to ending book deserts and improving children's literacy and book access in Metro Detroit. They are making quality, diverse, and culturally relevant books more accessible and increasing the number of books children have in their home libraries through free book distribution.

What types of nonprofit needs are addressed at PMCDoS?

The nonprofits' needs that are addressed at PMCDoS range from strategic to tactical, operations to administrative, and human to technical. They cover topics such as marketing/branding, volunteer recruitment, fundraising, grant writing, and event planning.

How much time does an event participant need to dedicate to the event? Is there event training?

There is no standard length for a PMCDoS event. Depending on the location of the event, it may be from a few hours to a full business day. This typically includes dedicated time for networking as well as working sessions. Time for meals may also be included as appropriate.

Prior to the event, volunteers and nonprofits may be required to participate in training. Training helps project manager volunteers become familiar with the unique needs and challenges facing nonprofits, and the logistics of the PMCDoS event. Training also helps nonprofit representatives to become familiar with project management concepts, and the logistics of the PMCDoS event. In addition, the local event team may provide coaching to nonprofit participants for selecting and describing their project problem statements.

How are volunteers paired with nonprofits?

The local event team uses each volunteer's event registration information and LinkedIn profile (if available) to create a match with a nonprofit based on how well the volunteer's skills and interests align with the nonprofit's mission and project needs. While matches are made prior to the event, they may need to be adjusted on the day of the event based on event attendance. For that reason, match information may not be made available to participants until the day of the event or if the match information is provided in advance, it may be subject to change.

How are nonprofits prepared for the PMCDoS?

The local event team will coach nonprofit participants on selecting and describing their project problem statements prior to the event. In addition, nonprofit participants may be offered training that familiarizes them with relevant project management concepts, and the logistics of the PMCDoS event.

Have additional questions or want to register?

Contact us at: manager.cdos@pmiglc.net

Invest in Yourself: Explore PMI's 12 Certifications

Have you taken a moment to explore the full range of certifications offered by the Project Management Institute? PMI currently offers 12 globally recognized credentials designed to support professionals at every stage of their career: CAPM®, PMP®, PMI-ACP®, PMI-RMP®, PMI-SP®, PMI-PBA®, PgMP®, PfMP®, PMI-PMOCP™, PMI-CP™, PMI-CP™-I, and PMI-CP™-M. Whether you are just entering the profession or leading enterprise-level portfolios, there is a certification aligned with your experience and career goals.

Earning a PMI certification is more than adding letters after your name. It signals credibility, validates your knowledge, demonstrates commitment to the profession, and often leads to increased career opportunities and earning potential. Certifications can also strengthen your confidence, expand your professional network, and position you as a leader within your organization. In today's competitive environment, continuous professional development is not optional... it's essential.

As your PMI Great Lakes Chapter Director of Certifications, I encourage you to visit [PMI.org](https://www.pmi.org) and explore which credential might be right for you. Our chapter is actively evaluating how we can better support members through training programs, mentorship opportunities, study groups, or simply answering your certification questions. If you are considering taking the next step in your professional journey, I would love to hear from you. Please feel free to reach out to Ron Papa at director.certifications@pmiglc.org — let's work together to help you achieve your certification goals.





**UPCOMING
EVENTS**



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SPRING SYMPOSIUM 2026

IMPLEMENTING AI IN A PROJECT MANAGEMENT WORLD



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GORDON-
JACKSON**



**KAREN
KOTCHER**



**BRENT
SCHIPPER**



JASON LEINART



NATALIA HEEL



RITESH SHAH



MARIE LEE



**SHALECE
DANIELS**



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Friday April 17



7am to 5pm



46100 Grand River Ave
Novi, Michigan, 48374

SPRING SYMPOSIUM 2026

IMPLEMENTING AI IN A PROJECT MANAGEMENT WORLD



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Friday April 17



7am to 5pm



46100 Grand River Ave
Novi, Michigan, 48374



PMI GREAT LAKES CHAPTER



Community *Day* of Service

Experienced project managers providing pro bono expertise to local nonprofits.

DATE

Saturday
April 25, 2026

TIME

8:00 AM
– 5:00 PM

LOCATION

CMU Troy
Campus

900 Tower Dr., Ste. 100
Troy, MI 48098



REGISTER NOW




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JOIN OUR AI POWERED HAPPY HOUR!

*Part happy hour. Part hands-on workshop.
100% worth your Thursday night.*




Cost: \$10 Member, \$15 Non-Member
Registration will be capped at 45

 **Pizza + NA beverages included**
(first come, first served)

 **Cash bar available**

June 18, 2026
6pm - 8:30pm

Mother Handsome,
14661 W ELEVEN MILE
Rd. SUITE 500. OAK
PARK, MI 48237

-  AI Icebreakers — Let AI write your elevator pitch. Own it. Share it. Cringe together.
-  "Human or AI?" — LinkedIn bios, project summaries, elevator pitches. You guess. We judge.
-  Prompt Bar — Walk up, write a prompt, watch the magic happen. Networking emails, stakeholder updates, risk assessments — all fair game.
- A facilitator keeps the energy high and the conversations flowing — no lectures, no PowerPoints, just good vibes and genuinely useful AI tips woven in.



Event Sponsor

*Mother
Handsome*



PM Musings

By: April Callis Birchmeier MCMP, ACC, PMP, CCMP™
The Project Manager's Role in Making Change Stick

When I was eight, I took dance lessons and became fascinated by something deeper than the music or the performance. What I loved most was the process of learning itself: repetition, practice, correction, and then that satisfying moment when something finally clicks. Real confidence rarely arrives all at once. More often, it grows quietly through effort, structure, and the chance to try again.

Like many children with big ideas and very little concern for logistics, I decided to teach what I was learning. After my lessons, I would go home, practice the steps, and then invite other kids to my basement for dance lessons of my own. I charged a nickel a lesson, which felt wonderfully official at the time. In my mind, I was not just sharing a few steps. I was building something.

Naturally, I also envisioned a performance. In order to make it feel real, I hung a red-flocked shower curtain on a pipe in front of the basement "stage." That curtain transformed everything. It made our little lessons feel like preparation for something important. It gave shape to the effort. It created a sense of purpose.

Of course, the production never quite came together. Kids lost interest. Schedules drifted. The whole thing unraveled the way childhood plans often do. There was no grand finale in my basement theater.

But the part that stayed with me was not the failed performance. It was the deep satisfaction of helping someone else learn. I loved watching another person go from uncertain to capable. I loved seeing the moment when confusion gave way to confidence.

Even then, I was far more interested in helping people succeed than in standing in the spotlight myself.

That is still true today, and it is one of the reasons I care so deeply about project management.

Project management is often associated with timelines, deliverables, governance, budgets, and risk logs. All of that matters. Good project management brings discipline to complexity and helps teams move from intention to execution. But at its best, project management is also about helping people learn their way into something new.

Every project asks people to do something different. A new system, a new process, a new structure, a new expectation, a new way of working together. Behind every milestone is a human learning curve. Behind every implementation plan is a group of people trying to understand what is changing, what is expected of them, and how they will succeed in the new environment.

That is one reason so many projects struggle. The plan may be solid, but the people doing the work are still finding their footing. A project can be technically sound and still stumble if the team is unclear, unsupported, or unconvinced. We can have the best schedule in the world and still miss the mark if we overlook the very human side of execution.

The most successful project leaders understand this. They know their role is not simply to keep tasks moving. It is to help people move with them.

That means creating clarity when things feel uncertain. It means reinforcing priorities when the pace gets fast. It means helping team members understand not only what needs to happen, but why it matters and how they can contribute. It means building confidence through communication, practice, feedback, and support.

In many ways, that is what I was trying to do in my basement at eight years old, minus the formal methodology and with far more nickels involved.

I wanted people to feel ready. I wanted them to have enough practice to trust themselves. I wanted the process to lead somewhere meaningful.

Those same principles matter in project environments. Teams perform better when expectations are clear. Stakeholders engage more effectively when they understand the purpose behind the work. Adoption is stronger when people have time to practice, ask questions, and build confidence before they are expected to perform flawlessly. Projects gain traction when leaders recognize that success does not come only from assigning tasks. It comes from equipping people to carry them out well.

This is especially important now. Project managers are being asked to lead in environments that are faster, more cross-functional, and more complex than ever before. The technical side of project management remains essential, but it is no longer enough on its own. Today's project leaders also need the ability to navigate resistance, build trust, communicate through uncertainty, and support people through transition.

That is where project management and change management work best together.

When project managers understand how people respond to change, they are better prepared to anticipate barriers before they become delays. They are more effective in stakeholder conversations. They are more equipped to partner with sponsors, support managers, and create the conditions for adoption, not just implementation.

I have seen this again and again in organizations across industries. The projects that sustain results are rarely the ones with the flashiest kickoff or the most polished slide deck. They are the ones where leaders paid attention to how people would experience the change. They planned not only for the work, but for the transition required to make the work stick.

That is why I continue to believe so strongly in practical, structured development for project leaders. Training matters, but not the kind that leaves people inspired for an hour and stranded on Monday morning. The best learning experiences help professionals build real capability. They offer tools people can use immediately. They make room for honest questions. They connect ideas to application. They help people walk away thinking, I can do this.

That is the kind of learning I have always loved, and it is the kind I still aim to create.

When I think back to that red-flocked shower curtain in my parents' basement, I smile. The performance never happened, but something more important began there. I discovered the joy of helping others grow into something new. I discovered that progress is often built through practice long before it is visible to anyone else. And I learned, even in a childlike way, that meaningful work is often about guiding people toward confidence.

Project management, at its core, is not just about managing work. It is about helping people and teams move successfully through the work of change.

April Callis Birchmeier MCMP, ACC, PMP, CCMP™ is a Global Guru in Organizational Culture, and internationally known organizational change management expert. She's also the bestselling author of [READY, Set, Change! Simplify and Accelerate Organizational Change](#). As a Qualified Education Provider, she prepares and trains project professionals to pass the CCMP™ Certified Change Management Professional certification.

You can reach her at April@Springboard-Consult.com



A banner image showing a magnifying glass over a document with the words "Job Opportunity" and "EMPLOYMENT" visible. Other text like "Inventory" and "Legal Administration" is partially visible in the background.

Job Opportunity

The PMI Job Board has enhanced features, making it easier to connect job seekers and employers in the project management industry. You can access PMIGL's Job Board of local postings at <https://pmiglc.org/job-postings>



What is Disciplined Agile Certification?

As a leader in project management education, we are working with Peak Business Management to offer the official PMI Disciplined Agile workshop and DASM certification program for individuals looking to pass the exam and become a Disciplined Agile Scrum Master (DASM). Learn more at <https://pmiglc.org/peakbusinessmanagement>

Earn Free PDUs!

Peak Business Management, is offering chapter members free PDUs! Please [visit their website](#) for more details. Be sure to use the password PeakPDU0922 to access this offer.

PMIGL is thrilled to shine a light on our partnership with IIL.

Members have access to an incredible array of benefits and amazing opportunities such as discounts on courses, free webinars, and so much more. Please visit the IIL/PMIGL website

What is KICKOFF™?

KICKOFF™ is a free, interactive project management course that only takes 45 minutes to complete. Use it to get up to speed on project management basics. Once you're done, you can share a badge that shows you know the basics of managing projects from start to finish. Please visit <https://www.pmi.org/kickoff/> for more Information.

Stay Up to Date with PMIGL

Help promote PMIGL by following us on [Facebook](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and share our upcoming events and volunteer opportunities as you see posted. You never know what door may open!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Deon Barnes
Richard Basher
Beth Braun
Allen Cooley
Frank Coon
Angela Daniels
Anthony Delli-Pizzi
Melissa Demott
Rutul Dholakiya
Donovan Drew
Anthony Essmaker
John Frederick
Shalyn Gardner
Cristin Keary
Eric Lecouteur
Hsinwei Liang
Bryan Lorion
Terence Mack
Muhammad Ahmad Malik
Jennifer Mattila
Aura Mendez
David Miechiels
Aryn Mitchell
Dominic Monte
Melinda Monty
Jamie Myers

Kylie Potter
Lisa Price
Sayli Pujari
Mary Rabban
Elizabeth Roberts
Maris Ryckman
Sage Salyer
Raneshia Singleton
Elizabeth Stieber
Briana Strode
Hali Tavalisky
Jomeca Thomas
Latasha Thompson
Crystal Tyler
Joshua Webb
David Wilde
Charles Wojtas
Kelsey Zienkiewicz
James Zukowski



MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES



Year 1

Jeannine Anderson

Melissa Bryant-Simpson

Jason Carter

Patrick Cholagh

Amanda Dickinson

Jennifer Dickson

Burak Durig

Ryan Dutton

Deanna Fahey

John Geahan

Fariborz Ghanavi

Riley Goodman

Rashelle Groulx

Brandon Hatfield

Mohandas Hegde

Austin Hurst

Gregory Kolevski

Charlotte Lyons

Daniel Mccarthy

Matthew Murphy

Sridar Ranganathan

Ana Smith

Rachel Smith

Alaa Soliman

Jamie Stanczyk

Joseph Struttman

David Witt



MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES



Year 3

Denisse Acosta
Michelle Bazzy
Madeleine Gorman
Patricia Jackson
Erin Kelly
Cheryl Lynch
Brandy Mccoy
Kyle Mcgrath
Conner Micallef
Melanie Mitchell
Amanda Musgrave
Melissa Nickola
Anastacia Reynolds
Angela Tyler
Jill Zachman

Year 5

Douglas Brouhard
Esther Jackson
Rodney Johnson

Year 10

Phil Bettendorf
David Kandt
Leighanne Martin
Melissa Miller
Trenaye Neequaye
Jesus Rivera-Rivera
Ashish Singh
Sarah Swarthout
Jacqueline Taylor
Deanna Tinnon

Year 15

Justin Davis
Gregory Hebert
Nachimuthu Kannan
John Nall



MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES



Year 20

Mary Lowing
Annalee Paul



Year 25

Margaret Villalobos

Year 30

Neil Goldman



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Sustained Annual Sponsorship Opportunities for 2026

Sponsors and recruiters are invited to connect with the PMIGL marketing team (director.marketing@pmiglc.net) to participate in PMIGL events

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Your LOGO could be here too! Reach out for more Info today