


# Kalamazoo Experiential Learning Center

## 2025 Event Sponsorship Opportunities

KELC Events is an event management company that designs and manages events while providing college interns with amazing experiential learning.

**Kalamazoo  
Experiential  
Learning Center** 

# KELC EVENTS

## *Elevator Pitch*

FLOOR

1

KELC is an event management organization that designs and implements events. We intentionally hire interns by giving them the unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in marketing, PR, sports, and event management.

FLOOR

2

When you hire our event team to manage an event, our interns are learning and you are investing in their future. All the while, our event leadership team ensures that your event is executed with the professionalism expected and required.

FLOOR

3

Our interns are hungry to learn about event planning and committed to making the events fun, exciting, relevant, and memorable. We do the “nitty gritty” planning and implementation, so that you can leverage your event and build your brand stories. Our expertise is a game changer and it secures event success.

FLOOR

4

We actually “live” customer experience. Everything we do is designed with the customer at the forefront. Our program elements are strategically weaved into the outcomes that will complement our stakeholder’s mission and event purpose.

## *Questions commonly asked.....*

### **SO HOW ARE YOUR INTERNS DIFFERENT?**

Most of our college interns come from the “client facing” programs at WMU. They love events, marketing, public relations, and sports. These programs are experiential learning intensive and they have been trained to be customer focused, professional, and intentional.

### **WHAT KIND OF EVENTS DO YOU DO?**

We manage both private and public events. A number of our public events are working within the community to provide place-making events, festivals, sports marketing events, and fundraising events. But for private events, we take the client’s ideas and assist in the planning, managing, and execution of their vision.

## *So, why experiential learning?*

We created this Elevator Pitch for a better understanding of our full capacity of event design and management. In our quest to provide experiential learning, we value the opportunity to work for clients managing their trusted events. Working on corporate events (grand openings, street festivals, symposiums, fundraising events, and sport events) allows our students to learn what it takes to work for a client and fulfill their expectations and event vision. The outcome? Together we maintain a commitment to on-going learning while elevating customer experience throughout.

## Who We Are

As a 501-c-3 organization, the Kalamazoo Experiential Learning Center (KELC) is a place where college interns work in the areas of marketing, public relations, and event management. We engage, coach, and inspire our event teams to implement events through experiential, feet-on-the-street opportunities that connect organizations, businesses, and communities to the power of events.

KELC Board of Directors

- Jacob Droppers, Varnum Law
- Bobby Hopewell, Mobile Health Resources
- Angela McMillan, NSDA
- Bob Miller, Community Volunteer
- Taya Pettis, Discover Kalamazoo
- Becca Shemberger, Tactile Medical
- Abby VandenBerg, Maple Hill Auto
- Deborah Droppers, KELC Events

## What We Do

We create event experiences. Our team follows the trends and works to understand how these trends can be relevant in our community. We outline the ways to create and manage event experiences that support brand messages and content that develops the stories your customers will embrace when they attend events. The events hosted by KELC are specifically created to connect attendees to the community, the businesses, and the belief that great things happen when people gather.

The series of events in this packet are all designed to connect businesses to the event that will ultimately sell your

product by using events to connect customers to the experience.

As you look at what events would be great to sponsor, explore the people who come to that event, check out the website, and then let us propose, in greater detail, a meaningful way to connect customers using live events. Ultimately, we want attendees who are loyal to the event and the businesses that support their experiences.

We are planning these events to happen in 2025, and looking to focus on ways to create interactive customer experiences.

## Why be a sponsor?

Your sponsorship helps us to continue delivering programming that enhances the quality of life throughout the Kalamazoo region and connects college students to the community through event experiences. Your partnership supports funding that creates event innovation which will connect your customers to the event experience in a more authentic way.

## Here's what the IEG\* statistics say:

- 93% of millennial attendees say that they like brands that sponsor live events.
- 81% say that the coolest brand experiences they've ever seen somehow included music in a live setting.
- 80% admitted that the best and most effective way for brands to connect with them is through a live event.

## We do it Differently

When students want to learn for their “real job” they will try anything to be successful. Sponsorship fulfillment is best achieved when its authentic and unique. Have a great idea? We are game to make it work and deliver the right ROI for success. Our goal is to make you successful.

## Did you know?

- 80% of attendees purchase product from a sponsoring brand after an event experience.
- 79% of brand managers use live events to sell their products.

## Events That Intentionally Support Entrepreneurs



### Festival Fridays

June to September | 2nd Fridays  
[www.FoodTruckRallyKZ.com](http://www.FoodTruckRallyKZ.com)

The purpose of this event is to activate the Arcadia Creek Festival Place (ACFP). It is designed as a popup festival including: live music, food trucks, merchandise vendors, games, and adult beverages. The event is also designed to encourage future event planners to feel comfortable planning an event at the ACFP. The events attract about 800-1,500 attendees.

#### Quick Facts:

- 4 Events with on-site exposure
- Event is themed to food celebration
- Attracts foodies and music lovers
- Ages: 21-60, families, loves events
- Middle income with an education
- Typically from Kalamazoo region
- Just wants to listen to music and meet friends.

### Tuesdays On the Road

June, July, August - every Tuesday

This event series travels to unique locations throughout Kalamazoo County. The purpose of the event is to change the way people interact with their public spaces. We create a small popup focusing on mid-week food experiences, acoustical music, yard games, and community gathering. The series features 4 locations that are visited each month.

#### Quick Facts:

- Three months of exposure
- Attendees are families and singles wanting a mid-week interactive food experience.
- An opportunity to reach specific community audiences



### KalamaTopia

November & December  
[www.KalamaTopia.com](http://www.KalamaTopia.com)

KalamaTopia is an outdoor, cold-air makers-market that celebrates the holidays. This market is designed to attract shoppers, urbanites, and people who love to support small businesses. The attendee also looks for downtown/urban events that celebrate local retailers.

#### Quick Facts:

- Event sponsorship booths
- Attracts attendees that want to support businesses/entrepreneurs
- Age range: 35-70, educated
- Company brand exposure
- Ability to connect with vendors and provide support



Food truck events can be placed practically anywhere and a popup event is realized. The community loves a picnic and Tuesdays on the Road feel just like that - A Picnic.

Festival Fridays and Tuesdays on the Road allow for product sampling, product staging, and employee volunteer presence.

## Events That Create Community Engagement, and Laughter



### Do-Dah Parade

June | June 7  
[www.DoDahKzoo.com](http://www.DoDahKzoo.com)

The parade has been part of the Kalamazoo landscape since 1984. It's a tradition and it is a satire parade. The parents who bring their kids, grew up on this parade and it is special to them. The parade is part of a multi-event weekend attracting 100,000 people. The parade also attracts companies that promote their business through the power of a parade.

#### Quick Facts:

- Free entry to the parade
- Attracts families who make it their tradition to attend, year after year
- Attracts about 50 companies
- Live Streaming of the parade
- Presenting level is parade marshal
- Judging representation
- Event day presence for ultimate exposure and impact

### Pedal the Zoo

Spring/Summer



Ever heard of Detroit Slow Roll? This event is a bike tour in the city that explores economic development projects and neighborhood spaces unknown. Working with neighborhood stakeholders, the route is designed to "pedal" as you explore new community development projects that make Kalamazoo unique. The sponsorship partnership is perfect for a business that wants to invest in a specific neighborhood.



### Vineyard Classic Bike Tour

September 7  
[www.VineyardClassicBikeTour.com](http://www.VineyardClassicBikeTour.com)

The Vineyard Classic Bike Tour has been a tradition in Paw Paw for more than 40 years. Featuring three bike tour routes (23 | 43 | 57 miles) that pass through lush vineyards right at the peak of the harvest season. It is a avid cyclist's favorite event because it offers flexibility, challenge, and great ambiance.

#### Quick Facts:

- Target audience is bicyclists, health conscious enthusiasts.
- Attendees are 40-70 who are educated and appreciate social events through exercise.
- Connection and support of the Paw Paw Wine and Harvest Festival
- News releases and media talk shows
- Event-day exposure

#### Quick Facts:

- Attendees are neighborhood members that want to use cycling as a way to explore their neighborhood.
- Ability to partner with Kalamazoo's thriving bike community
- Help promote fellow local businesses
- Ability to work with families to use cycling as a health and wellness opportunity.
- Ability to promote the bike lanes as part of connectivity throughout the city.
- Attendance exposure to families and community members
- Event-day exposure

# Support Community Events & College Student Learning



## Kalamazoo Block Parties

June - August, and Halloween

A series of four neighborhood block parties designed to meet marginalized families in their front yard connecting youth with sports and community programming. Partnering with WMU student-athletes, this event provides just the right competition to laugh, engage, and win a ton of prizes. The event connects with both the City of Portage and Kalamazoo Community Policing (KDPS) Units.

### Quick Facts:

- Attendees are specific to the neighborhood and typically include middle school aged kids and grandparents.
- Sponsors can connect with the kids and families to make an impact.
- The event is perfect for companies that also want to give back and have employees volunteer to run the events.
- Opportunity to host a booth.

## Scripps Spelling Bee

March 15

It's the real Scripps National Spelling Bee that is hosted in Kalamazoo County in March. KELC events agreed to be the fiscal sponsor for the event, coordinate the regional competition, and then raise the funds to support the winner and their representatives to attend the National Spelling Bee in Washington DC.

This event accentuates community learning, academic competition outside the classroom, and social/emotional learning.



### Quick Facts:

- Assisting marginalized students learn the power and benefit of spelling through competition
- Supporting the benefit of household learning through the spelling competition preparation
- Community pride in participating in a national event with a regional qualifier
- Financially support a student to represent a community of people.



## Kzoo Event Academy

Quarterly Events

Designed as educational workshops, this series offers sponsors the chance to elevate events and event planning. The target audience group is topic specific which allows for a results-based sponsorship. Educational workshops include topics:

- Event Management 101
- Event Risk Management Planning
- Event Day Execution
- Event Volunteer Development

### Quick Facts:

- The target audience is event planner and managers in Kalamazoo area
- Ability to connect with event planners to sell supplies and services
- Ability to work with community organizations who are looking to improve their event management delivery of programs
- Event-day exposure

## Kalamazoo Digital Media Meet-up

Focusing on small businesses and nonprofits

Since 2009, Kalamazoo Social Media Week has partnered with brands, companies and organizations to foster connections with industry thought leaders, local experts, and the diverse, passionate community of current and aspiring social media marketing professionals in Kalamazoo.

Now known as Kalamazoo Digital Media Meetup, the networking group hosts events and meetings for anyone looking to expand their Digital Media and technological knowledge.

The events take different forms and it really depends on the topic as to whether it is a meeting or a half-day conference. The event hosts local speakers and media 'experts' where they present and then attend a social gathering afterward. This event allows small business owners to build connections and gain knowledge to better propel their business forward on all digital platforms.



### Quick Facts:

- Sponsors engage with talented marketing communications professionals and decision makers from a variety of industries
- Attendees are professionals who want to learn more and elevate their brand.
- Sponsors have the opportunity to position their brand as a leader in your field
- Cultivate a local talent pool for recruitment and retention
- Promotion of your products and services to an audience seeking new ideas and to improve their processes in marketing communications
- Supporting and celebrating the Kalamazoo community



Truly, at the end of the day, what we do is connect college students to their community. They learn that “place” is important.

**KELC isn't just about internships.  
It's about teaching what it means to be part of a community.**

**That's priceless.**

# Benefit Packages, Opportunities, and Financial Support

Sponsorship is advertising and it should be designed to create the opportunity to connect with new or current audiences. The categories of The VIP, The Marketer, The Planner and The Crew are offered for each of the KELC hosted events. The price range indicates the level of sponsorship. There is also an opportunity to tailor a new element that will enhance the event as well as the sponsorship benefit. The grid on the following page provides a quick view of the various benefits for each category.

We recommend that you first look for the event(s) that connects with your targeted audience. Each event description outlines the targeted audience. The events connect with families, foodies, craft beer lovers, cyclists, and people that love and support downtown. There are many different options.

And, if you are a company that also believes it is important to support events that reach out authentically to marginalized families, then we recommend that you sponsor the Kalamazoo Block Party or Spelling Bee initiative.

Remember, we are always willing to tailor a package that will uniquely connect you to the attendees and the event mission. Our team can provide a proposal based on your dollar commitment to supporting the placemaking and community engagement our events bring to the Kalamazoo region.

When you decide to sponsor, please use the sponsorship commitment form to outline how you want to be involved. And know that we will work with you to tailor a program that works for your company and your brand message.

## Sponsorship Category Selection

Event	VIP   \$2,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Festival Fridays	VIP   \$2,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Tuesdays On the Road	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Kalamazoo Digital Media	VIP   \$2,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
KalamaTopia	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Do-Dah Parade	VIP   \$1,500	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Kalamazoo Block Party	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Vineyard Classic Bike Tour	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Pedal the Zoo	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Kzoo Event Academy	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
Spelling Bee	Presenting   \$5,000	Marketer   \$1,000	Planner   \$500	Crew   \$250



*So much of what we do is about connecting people to a cause greater than their own "world." Events open eyes, hearts, and minds to what is possible when people come together to celebrate community and the needs that create us all to believe in something bigger than ourselves.*

Here is a quick reference guide on the sponsorship benefits. The event team is ready to create new opportunities to provide additional impact and connection to the audiences that attend these events. We're always ready to try something that will result in a win-win outcome.

In our pledge to be innovative and fulfillment driven, we also want to hear from our sponsors as to how we can make these events more customer-experience driven.

Sponsorship Benefits	The VIP \$1,000 - \$2,000	The Marketer \$500 - \$999	The Planner \$300 - \$499	The Crew \$100 - \$299
Industry Exclusivity	●			
Free Event Registrations	●	●		
<b>Pre-Event Recognition</b>				
Live Media Mentions and Talk Shows	●			
Website & Social Media Presence	●	●	●	●
Printed Promotional News Releases	●	●	●	●
<b>Live Event Recognition</b>				
Employee Hosts and Volunteer Networking	●			
Stage Advertising (Printed and live announcements)	●			
10' by 10' Event Booth	●	●		
Live Broadcasting Coverage	●			
Logos on Sponsor Banners	●	●	●	●
Event Give Away Item	●			
<b>Post Event Recognition</b>				
Social Media Posts	●	●	●	●
Volunteer Recognition	●	●	●	●
News Releases	●	●	●	●
Next Year's Sponsor Package	●	●	●	●

# KELC Sponsor Commitment Form 2025

www.ExperientialLearningCenter.org | 1417 S. Burdick Street | Kalamazoo, MI 49001

T: (269) 388-2830 | F: (269) 388-3083

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sponsorship Category Selection

\$ _____	Festival Fridays	VIP   \$2,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Tuesdays On the Road	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Kalamazoo Digital Media	VIP   \$2,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	KalamaTopia	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Do-Dah Parade	VIP   \$1,500	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Kalamazoo Block Party	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Vineyard Classic Bike Tour	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Pedal the Zoo	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Kzoo Event Academy	VIP   \$1,000	Marketer   \$500	Planner   \$300	Crew   \$100
\$ _____	Spelling Bee	Presenting   \$5,000	Marketer   \$1,000	Planner   \$500	Crew   \$250

If donating a product or service, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon receipt of this sponsorship commitment form, you will receive an invoice. Our team will connect with you to help you maximize sponsorship benefits and confirm sponsorship fulfillment.

Checks are payable to:  
KELC Events  
**(Kalamazoo Experiential Learning Center)**

- Check is enclosed
- Check will be processed and sent under separate cover
- Please invoice business

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Kalamazoo Experiential Learning Center
- The KELC is a Michigan nonprofit corporation | LARA: 71556Y
  - The IRS public charity 509 (a) (2) Federal Tax ID: 46-5093471
  - Michigan Attorney General's Office Professional Fundraiser License: 54077

For more information:  
Event Team  
E: [director@experientiallearningcenter.org](mailto:director@experientiallearningcenter.org)  
T: (269) 806-5506  
Deborah Droppers, Executive Director  
E: [deb@eventkalamazoo.com](mailto:deb@eventkalamazoo.com)  
T: (269) 330-6202

## Thank You 2024 Event Sponsors

So much of what we do is based on the support of our sponsors. Ideally, sponsorships should account for 30% of our revenues. This is a good goal for our event team to look at how we can engage and support collaborators. We need to improve our sponsorship revenues because this allows us to add value to the events, create impact learning for interns, and support an event design that provides relevant experiences.

Please take a minute to determine how your company can support KELC while gaining the advertising value of being a sponsor.



Irving S. Gilmore Foundation  
Ibison Concessions  
Kalamazoo Co. Pre-K  
WWMT Newschannel 3  
Advia Credit Union



Irving S. Gilmore Foundation



Irving S. Gilmore Foundation  
Imperial Beverage  
Lume  
Hits 96.5  
Bestway Disposal  
Kellogg Community Credit Union



Conan Venus  
LKF Marketing  
Argo's East



Irving S. Gilmore Foundation  
Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety  
The Creamery  
Edison Neighborhood  
Hollander Development

Thank you  
for your  
consideration.

Together, we can do great things!

KELC Events  
1417 S. Burdick Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49001  
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(269) 388-2830

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