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THIS JUST IN

Survey: Workers pay 3.1% more for health benefits

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In its 2007 survey of employer-sponsored health plans to be released Monday, **Mercer** in Detroit found that benefit costs for area employees increased 3.1 percent this year to an average of \$8,434 per employee. That compares with a statewide increase of 4.5 percent to an average of \$8,730.

The study surveyed 36 large local companies with 500 or more employees.

Other findings:

- 70 percent of employees covered by employer health plans are enrolled in PPOs, 17 percent in HMOs, 8 percent in consumer-driven health plans, 3 percent in traditional fee-for-service plans and less than 1 percent in point-of-service plans, which offer more provider options.

- The average employee contribution for employee-only coverage is \$71 a month for a PPO and \$78 for an HMO.

— *Sherri Begin*

Democratic bills would outlaw hiring illegal immigrants

State House Democrats are proposing legislation that takes aim at undocumented workers. It includes a measure that would make it a hire illegal immigrants.

The bills, announced last week but not yet introduced, also would require employers to document the legal status of their workers. Emp penalties, fines up of to \$250,000 and prison time for repeated violations. Michigan workers would be able to sue companies that replace undocumented workers.

— *Amy Lane*

Lear gives CEO bigger paycheck

Seating and electronics supplier **Lear Corp.** last week gave CEO **Bob Rossiter** a 13.6 percent bump in his base pay and extended his contract. The Southfield-based company raised Rossiter's annual base salary to \$1.25 million and he would be eligible for an annual bonus of at least \$1.88 million) of his base salary, according to a filing Friday with the **U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission**.

— *Crain News Service*

Detroit agency hires Hamtramck official

Erik Tungate, director of Hamtramck's **Department of Community and Economic Development** since 2005, will start as business development director of **Detroit Economic Growth Corp.** on Dec. 3.

Under Tungate, Hamtramck's Downtown Development Authority was reactivated with tax-increment financing from the Joseph Campau and launched facade and street-scape programs.

— *Robert Ankeny*

Harmonie Park plan on tap

A proposal for development of the **Paradise Valley Cultural and Entertainment District** in Harmonie Park is scheduled to be unveiled at the Harmonie Club Building, 311 E. Grand River Ave.

The plan was developed by the **University of Detroit Mercy School of Architecture's Detroit Collaborative Design Center**.



Advertisement

— Robert Ankeny

Rehab Institute loses funding

The U.S. House last week defeated a federal appropriations bill that would have restored research funding of \$2 million over the next five years to the **Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan**.

The institute had its funding cut in October when President Bush vetoed a bill that included nearly \$9.5 million for traumatic brain-injury research.

"This will probably stop our brain-injury research program until we can get additional funding," said **Robin Hanks**, chief of rehabilitation and research in neuropsychology.

— Sherri Begin

New restaurants planned

The sale of four local **Mitchell's Fish Market** and **Cameron's Steakhouse** restaurants is helping to fund local development by Columbus-based **Mitchell Restaurants**.

Cameron Mitchell plans to open a restaurant at Big Beaver and Coolidge at Troy Place in April based on a restaurant it operates in Ohio called **Big Fish**.

Earlier this month, Cameron Mitchell announced an agreement to sell 19 restaurants to **Ruth's Chris Steak House** for about \$94 million. The sale includes **Mitchell's Fish Markets** in Birmingham, Livonia and Rochester Hills as well as **Cameron's Steakhouse** in Birmingham.

— Brent Snavelly

College foundation appoints Price as interim president

Former **Marygrove College** President **Glenda Price** was named interim president of the Southfield-based **Michigan Colleges Foundation** as the foundation seeks a successor to retiring President **Bill Liebold**.

Price, 68, retired from the Marygrove post last year. Liebold, president of the foundation since 1991, had already announced his plans to step down. The foundation board appointed a team to begin the search for a successor.

The foundation handles fund-raising and endowment programs for 14 private colleges.

— Chad Halcom

Tech firms land NASA grants

NASA has awarded six grants to five local companies.

Each of the businesses received first-phase grants, which qualifies them to receive up to \$100,000 for research.

Five small-business innovation research grants were awarded to **Michigan Aerospace Corp.**, **Picomatrix L.L.C.** and **Michigan Engine** in Ann Arbor and **Xiomax Technologies** of Ypsilanti. Michigan Aerospace received two grants.

A small-business technology-transfer grant was awarded to Ann Arbor-based **Virtual EM Inc.**, which is working in collaboration with **Purdue University**.

Business innovation grants provide money for businesses to research and develop new technology. Tech-transfer grants do the same through university participation.

— Sheena Harrison

\$140M patent judgment upheld

Judge **Elaine Bucklo** of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois judge upheld a \$140 million judgment Friday against **Motorola** for patent infringement against **David Colvin**, a Commerce Township inventor and founder of **z4Technologies Inc.**

—Tom Henderson

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