

Chris Cook Believes in Cornerstone Alliance

“We have invested in Cornerstone for many years and most recently made a five-year commitment to support Cornerstone’s efforts,” says Chris Cook, President of Abonmarche, an engineering, architectural and surveying firm in Benton Harbor. “We believe that Cornerstone Alliance effectively generates leads and opportunities for new business to locate in Michigan’s **Great** Southwest. They also work diligently to support existing business. Their efforts to improve our community’s economic performance help our business succeed.”

Abonmarche has been contributing to the area’s economic prosperity for decades. “We have been involved with the planning and design of public spaces before placemaking was cool,” said Cook. Abonmarche was one of the firms that assisted in the development of the infrastructure for the Benton Harbor Arts District as well as the Whirlpool Riverview Campus, and Harbor Shores. “We are quite fortunate to have Whirlpool Corporation in our backyard,” said Cook.

Looking ahead, Cook is optimistic about the economic outlook in Berrien County. Abonmarche is forecasting 10-15% growth of overall staff in 2015; the biggest bump for the firm since 2009. Cook has seen an increase in land surveying; an indication that properties are likely to be developed.

Mr. Cook and his wife, Katie, are also personal investors in Cornerstone Alliance. “We grew up in the area, and feel strongly that it is important to give back to the community,” he said. “I, like many young people, graduated from college, got married and initially left the area. Ultimately, we felt that southwest Michigan was the best place for us to live, work and raise a family. Of course, we would be delighted if our kids repeated what we did. It’s important to make our communities attractive to the young professionals.”

Cook added, “As the president of Abonmarche and personally, I feel that supporting the economic development work that Cornerstone Alliance does is something that all of us should be doing. Successful economic development happens when residents, businesses and municipalities work together.”



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President, Abonmarche

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38 W. Wall St.
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
269.925.6100
www.cstonealliance.org



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