

# BUSINESS

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## Tech grads stay put

*79% work in state  
after graduation*

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When Kevin Diangoor graduated from the University of Michigan in 1994, he had a bachelor's degree in computer science and the skills to get a high-tech job almost anywhere in the United States.

But Diangoor, who was raised in West Bloomfield, said he didn't consider leaving the state.

Now, 7 years later, he has a tech career with the start-up **Web Elite**, a wife, a house in Ann Arbor and thoughts about starting a family.

"There was great opportunity and plenty of choices," Diangoor, 29, said. "I had everything I wanted here."

A state study, to be released today, found that a majority of college graduates with technology degrees choose to stay in Michigan.

The results are important for a state where economic development officials have been trying to collect evidence that shows

Michigan is not a rust-belt state.

Of the 30,000 graduates with life sciences, information technology and engineering degrees tracked between 1997 and 2000, a total of 79 percent are working in Michigan, the study shows.

In addition, more than half — 55 percent — of the students who came to a Michigan public university from outside the state stayed after graduation.

Diangoor's wife, Surekha, 33, came to Michigan from India and earned a master's degree in electrical engineering systems from U-M in 1993.

She decided to stay and now works for **Cisco Systems Inc.** "Ann Arbor feels like home," she said. "The West Coast is too crowded and too fast.."

Of the 21 percent of the graduates who left Michigan, 11 percent moved to be closer to family and friends, 53 percent for better job opportunities and 7 percent to avoid the inclement weather. Others left for different reasons.

"This really blows a hole through any anecdotal perceptions that our high-tech graduates are fleeing the state," said

Doug Rothwell, president and chief executive officer of the **Michigan Economic Development Corp.**

The organization, along with the Presidents Council and State Universities of Michigan, sponsored the survey.

Rothwell said this study caps 18 months of work the state has done to generate evidence that Michigan is a technology player.

The evidence includes:

- Challenging the American Electronics Association's decision in May to make Michigan No. 17 in its annual ranking of Cyberstates. If the automotive sector had been counted, the MEDC said, the state would have ranked fourth.

- **Covisint LLC** officials confirming they would keep the company in the state. Covisint is the online Internet exchange being developed by some of the world's largest automakers. It is temporarily located in Southfield.

- The launch of **LinkMichigan**, an initiative to generate more high-speed telecommunications investment within the state.

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