

# BottomLine



THE VOICE OF MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS // VOL. 31, NO. 8 // AUGUST 2020

How to Operate  
in the New  
Normal for Rest  
of Year

pg 16

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- Executive Order Closes Indoor Service at Bars, but Bill Allows for Cocktails-To-Go // PAGE 32



# Grab some



# to stay cool this summer.

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# BottomLine

THE VOICE OF MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS  
VOL. 31, NO. 8 // AUGUST 2020

## features



### SCHOLARSHIPS ARE STILL AWARDED DESPITE COVID-19 CANCELING THE ANNUAL LUNCHEON

The 12th Annual Scholarship Luncheon may have been canceled for 2020 due to COVID-19, but the scholarship program goes on. In addition, the Midwest Independent Retailers Foundation (MIRF) sent each scholar a lawn sign that reads “Congratulations - 2020 Scholarship Winner” with their names and school logos on them.



### COVER STORY // HOW TO OPERATE IN THE NEW NORMAL FOR REST OF YEAR

Last month, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued a new executive order that essentially stated: “No shirts, no shoes, no mask — no service.”



### MICHIGAN // EXECUTIVE ORDER CLOSES INDOOR SERVICE AT BARS, BUT BILL ALLOWS FOR COCKTAILS-TO-GO

Just weeks after opening, bars in Michigan, once again, were ordered to close their doors for inside service.





# president's message

**EDWARD WEGLARZ** // MIRA PRESIDENT & CEO

## What Can We Expect?

**B**y the time you receive this edition of the MIRA Bottom Line magazine, I am sure you will all have been informed of the sale of Benchmark Beverage Company (BBC) by MIRA to LKI Investment Company. The transaction was amicable with both sides feeling that it resulted in a win-win conclusion. You are also aware that Auday Arabo was also a principle piece of the puzzle in the change, departing MIRA and assuming the Presidency of BBC. This only made sense, as much as Auday has been involved in developing BBC. He was a great leader for MIRA and MIRA hates to see him leave, but he will still be available for consultation.

Enter Ed Weglarz. I have been selected by the MIRA board to fill the President & CEO position to keep MIRA moving forward. I have been professionally involved in the gas station and convenience store business my entire adult life and I've been in leadership positions in trade associations for the last 22 years.

Auday turned over a Super Bowl caliber team to me; all I had to do was keep the momentum flowing. Then along came COVID-19! While most of our members were in businesses that were deemed "essential" the road travelled has not been very smooth. Gasoline volume was down as much as 75% during the second quarter of 2020, resulting in lost revenue inside the convenience store. Grocery stores still enjoyed rather good customer numbers, but had difficulty procuring saleable stock. Pinch points in the supply chain from the manufacturer thru the distributor to the retailer often caused empty shelves. The only bright spot were party stores that were able to survive despite delivery problems.

All retailers encountered unforeseen expenses to stay compliant with state and local laws, regulations, and rules. In addition, staffing was a day-to-day challenge with day care facilities and schools being closed, some employees could not work their usual hours. In some cases, damage and looting by protestors and demonstrators caused unwarranted damage.

MIRA concentrated on keeping our members in all states up to date on the Executive Orders that were frequently published, so you could maintain compliance.

When you are in a hole the first thing you need to do is stop digging! So now the challenges are to help everybody move forward. Not necessarily to the old normal but, rather, the new normal. We do not know exactly how that is going to look. I think everything will look different. More customers will be working from home in the future. How can you take advantage of that fact and maximize the opportunity? We do not know at what speed the economy will recover, but it will! Hope for the best, expect the worst. Be open to change. Listen to your suppliers and listen to your customers. What changes in products and services are they looking for?

I pledge to you that MIRA will be the ears and eyes monitoring trends that we are made aware of. Do not be bashful about bringing up issues that you see in the marketplace. We need to look at the future as a new beginning. Together we can move forward; we have a solid foundation to build upon. I look forward to meeting you at your stores over next few months, but in the meantime feel free to call with any issues. ■

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**For More Information Please Contact Our Midwest Region:**

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## Scholarships are Still Awarded Despite COVID-19 Canceling the Annual Luncheon

■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*

The 12th Annual Scholarship Luncheon may have been canceled for 2020 due to COVID-19, but the scholarship program goes on. In addition, the Midwest Independent Retailers Foundation (MIRF) sent each scholar a lawn sign that reads "Congratulations - 2020 Scholarship Winner" with their names and school logos on them.

"We didn't feel that the student should suffer, because the logistic had to change," said Ed Weglarz, MIRA President & CEO, who drove to Chicago last month to deliver checks, signs, certificates and the booklet produced every year featuring the winners, and sponsors. Four college students from Chicago were recipients this year. "We had folks who sponsored and companies willing to donate to the program, so we wanted to keep the tradition going."

The luncheon would have been held at the Detroit Athletic Club (DAC) like it is every year but because of COVID, the venue is closed. "We thought we would do whatever we could to recognize the students," said Weglarz, who also penned a letter about the Scholarship program on page 6 of this issue. In his comments to the student he wrote, "This period in your life marks a key transition

as you pursue your college education. We hope your college education provides you with the necessary skills to make a difference in the world. You will be called upon to use your God given talents in your specific field to not only be great, but more importantly do good. Whatever field of study you may choose, always excel in it and commit to professionalism. Always push the limits of education and your ability to learn and absorb."

Students also had opportunity to share their thoughts on what the scholarship program means to them. "This scholarship truly means a lot to me," said Dezaray S. Dunigan attending Henry Ford College. "Attending college is a huge privilege, and I'm grateful that I have the opportunity to do so, but the expense of school can be overwhelming and discouraging at times. The MIRF Scholarship I received rewards my hard work in high school, college and encourages me to maintain that work ethic and focus while studying. It is truly an honor to have received this and will go toward my education and future."

"We were happy to carry on the tradition to providing the scholarships," said Weglarz.

The scholarships are made possible, because of the sponsors and supporters. This year, sponsors are helping 26 students pay for college. "We are

truly grateful for the sponsors and supporters," said Weglarz. "These annual scholarships are made possible, because of our sponsors who value the importance of education."

Students shared their gratitude with association for continuing with the scholarship program despite the challenges. "When we called students to get their bios to put in the booklet, they were all very happy to get the scholarship. It takes a little financial pressure off of them."

The association was also very pleased that the companies were still willing to participate. "We are so grateful that companies were willing to continue with the program, because the situation was unclear for so many companies," said Weglarz. "We are still dealing with so many unknowns. We told our sponsors how we were going to handle it this year and that we felt we had to continue the tradition of recognizing students. They agreed with us."

The students are grateful. In the following pages, read how each of them answered the question "what does it mean to you to receive the MIR Foundation Scholarship?" ■

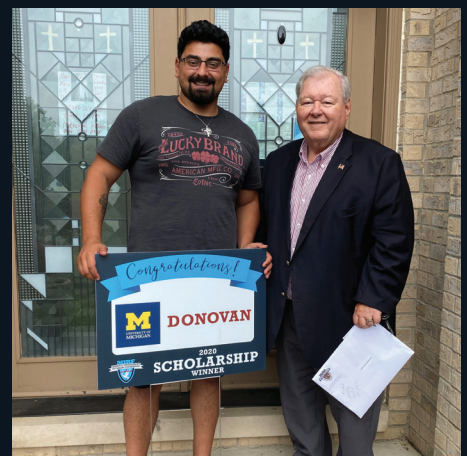
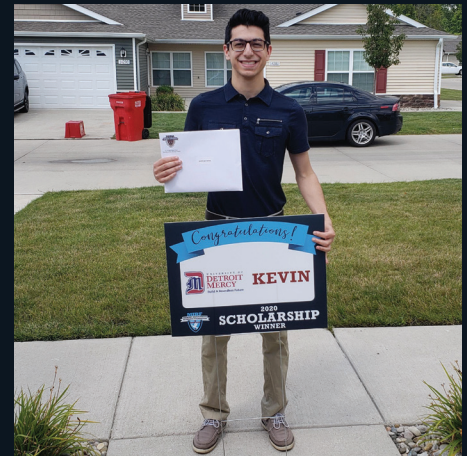
*\*Writers with Epiphany Communications and Coaching are content creators for the MIRA Bottom Line.*





# SCHOLARSHIPS

## 2020



# ENJOY THE MOMENT



## MESSAGE TO SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

I wish to express my sincerest congratulations to the scholarship winners. You have experienced a conclusion to your school year that no one else has encountered. Depending on the grade you are in you may have missed a graduation ceremony, a prom, an awards event. At the very least you didn't experience the usual traditions that go with the end of the scholastic school year. On the other hand, you learned to be flexible and innovative while attempting to conclude the school year employing online tools and learning. While the process probably resulted in bumps and bruises along the way, it was also a learning experience above and beyond the traditional classroom curriculum that you were used to. You can look at that situation as an inconvenience or an opportunity. Later in life, you might discover that the unique lock-down that was forced upon us resulted in a learning experience that could never have been duplicated. The ability to favorably react to unforeseen situations can be an attribute that will serve you well as your career unfolds. No one can take your education or awards away from you. Every one of

you receiving this scholarship award are here because someone believed in you, someone pushed you, someone sacrificed for you because they love you and want a better life for you. Did I ever change the world? I think I do and continue to, one person at a time. A little hello, a smile, kindness and simple courtesy does make a difference, doesn't cost anything and does change in this fast-paced instant access social media frenzy we live in today. I know each one of you here today will continue to change the world in your own way and make a difference in your community, your state and the world, but remember where it all started. It started within your family!

To the scholarship recipients, this period in your life marks a key transition as you pursue your college education. We hope your college education provides you with the necessary skills to make a difference in the world. You will be called upon to use your God given talents in your specific field to not only be great, but more importantly do good. Whatever field of study you may choose, always excel in it and commit to professionalism. Always push the limits of education and your ability to learn and absorb.

## MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Parents, your efforts and sacrifices have contributed directly towards your child's success. You should be proud of yourselves – not only for raising such a great son or daughter, but also for valuing education and for doing your best to see that your children are provided with the endless opportunities higher education offers. Every parent wants their children to have a better life than they had, and today you see some of the fruits of your hard work and sacrifice.

## MESSAGE TO SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

Sponsors and supporters, thank you for the generous contributions you have given to the young bright minds receiving these scholarships. I know that you do so because of your belief that the way to improve the quality of life is through education and hard work. Today, twenty-six students are being presented with scholarship awards, allowing them to pursue undergraduate studies at various universities and colleges. These annual scholarships are made possible because of you, who value the importance of education! We thank you for helping these young people advance in life.

Again, congratulations to the scholarship winners and to their parents, and thank you to all the sponsors for valuing and committing to education. Good luck to you all in your future endeavors and God Bless! Remember, "Life is but a dream" and it flies by very fast so enjoy every minute!

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ed Weglarz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

**ED WEGLARZ, MIRA PRESIDENT & CEO / MIRA FOUNDATION CHAIRMAN**



# MEET THE 2020

## SCHOLARSHIP Winners

The Midwest Independent Retailers Foundation is proud to award scholarships to these extraordinary and deserving students throughout the Midwest and we are grateful to our sponsors for their generous support!



### FAIZA M. ABUHAMDEH

Faiza is a junior at Cleveland State University where she will complete her master's degree in occupational therapy. She attended Cuyahoga Community College for her undergraduate studies in health sciences and pre-occupational therapy. Faiza graduated from Strongsville High School where she was a member of Rho Kappa Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta Honor Society, D.A.R.E (which helps educate children on drug and alcohol awareness), and participated in a DECA program for business. She currently volunteers with Metro Health Hospital alongside occupational therapists.

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Receiving the MIRF Scholarship is very meaningful to me, because it is a great honor knowing that my hard work is paying off. It motivates me to keep pushing towards my degree, knowing that I can pursue my passion. This scholarship can help me pay for extra college expenses, so nothing can get in the way of my education. Thank you, MIRF, for choosing me as a recipient."*

**SPONSORED BY: BORDEN DAIRY**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: MEGA MARKET**



### KRISTEN D. AGUILAR

Kristen is a sophomore at Columbia College Chicago majoring in creative writing and minoring in voiceover. She finished her first year on the dean's list with a 4.0 GPA. Although she is not currently involved in any extracurriculars, Kristen does everything in her power to devote herself to her studies and maintaining her work schedule. She is also drafting her first novel and is pursuing a career in voice acting.

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Receiving this scholarship is a wonderful opportunity for me. Now, I can focus more on my studies and not worry so much about any financial burden. Knowing that I was chosen to receive this scholarship fills me with so much pride and happiness, especially since I worked so hard throughout the school year to get where I am now. I feel so fortunate to have the chance to continue my education with one less thing to worry about."*

**SPONSORED BY: PRAIRIE FARMS DAIRY CO.**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: VALLI PRODUCE**







## DEZARAY S. DUNIGAN

Dezaray is a Sophomore at Henry Ford College studying business administration. She graduated from Garden City High School where she was a member of National Honor Society, Student Council, Link Leaders, Key Club, and Air force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC). Dezaray played multiple instruments through middle school and high school, mostly playing the tuba, trombone, and French horn. She volunteers for the Garden City Historical Museum and the Garden City Presbyterian Church. Dezaray plans to transfer to a university once she completes her associate degree.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"This scholarship truly means a lot to me. Attending college is a huge privilege, and I'm grateful that I have the opportunity to do so, but the expense of school can be overwhelming and discouraging at times. The MIR Foundation scholarship I received, which rewards my hard work in high school and college, encourages me to maintain that work ethic and focus while studying. It is truly an honor to have received this and will go towards my education and future."*

**SPONSORED BY: LIPARI FOODS**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: DUNKIN'**



## NATHAN D. ESCH

Nathan is a freshman at Aquinas College where he will be playing baseball and studying mathematics. He graduated from Fowlerville High School where he was captain of the varsity baseball and football teams, as well as participated in National Honor Society. Nathan volunteers frequently with youth sports teams in the area and through programs in the lower-level schools of the district.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am supremely honored to receive this award; it is a reminder of the high expectations that are placed upon me and those that I place upon myself. I hope to conduct myself with exceptional class and character and utilize this scholarship to its fullest."*

**SPONSORED BY: MERCANTILE BANK OF MICHIGAN**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: MARKHAM OIL**



## JACOB N. FAGERSTROM

Jacob is a freshman at Eastern Michigan University studying biology with a concentration in organismal diversity. He graduated from Clio High School with a 3.98 GPA. In high school, he was a board member for National Honor Society, Student Congress, and International Club. Jacob was also active in the music program, where he was the section leader of the percussion section, and he ran music instruction of the marching band. He currently volunteers through Clio High School, Boy Scouts of America, and the New Covenant Church.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Receiving this scholarship is a great honor for me. This scholarship is playing a pivotal role in my future, helping me complete my college education. I believe that this will help me focus on my studies without worrying about my finances. Again, I am extremely thankful that I will have the opportunity to study my field and achieve my goals at Eastern Michigan University."*

**SPONSORED BY: FAYGO BEVERAGES**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: OSCAR W. LARSON**





## EMILY FISHER

Em is a freshman at Michigan State University majoring in arts and humanities. A graduate from Washtenaw International High School, Em was the senior representative of the Gay-Straight Alliance and captain of the varsity swim team. Em has volunteered as a swim coach for the middle school team, helped with community events such as Girls on the Run, and participated as a poet-activist to spread awareness about gentrification and housing injustice.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"This scholarship is an affirmation that I am doing something I enjoy and feel strongly about. Working at a local business combines my interest in working at a community level, as well as in a sustainable environment. These are things I want to focus on in college and this scholarship helps me to know I am on the right track!"*

**SPONSORED BY: MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS FOUNDATION**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: YPSILANTI FOOD CO-OP**



## LOGAN E. FRANCKOWSKI

Logan is a freshman in the Honors College at Youngstown State University studying respiratory care. She graduated from Austintown Fitch High School where she was captain of the track & field team. Logan was also a member of numerous organizations such as National Honor Society, Link Crew, Art club, and Spirit Club. She volunteers her time bringing Pets of Greater Youngstown Area therapy dogs to her school. Logan also dedicates her time to helping at a softball quarter auction fundraiser, helped campaign for local school elective, painted murals on the elementary school playground and local park, helped serve meals at her church, and has tutored fellow students.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"When I learned I would be receiving this scholarship, I was extremely excited. I feel honored to be chosen. This scholarship means more to me than you'll ever know. I am truly grateful and it will certainly help to defray the cost of my education in the future."*

**SPONSORED BY: CONIFER INSURANCE COMPANY**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: ALL-STAR GAMING LLC**



**Conifer  
Insurance  
Company**



## MARIANNE T. GEORGE

Marianne is a freshman at Lyman Briggs College within Michigan State University studying biochemistry and molecular biology on the pre-med track. She graduated from Walled Lake Central High School where she was a Summa Cum Laude scholar, president of French club, and a National Honor Society tutor. Marianne has studied the violin for eight years and volunteers weekly at Saint Thomas Chaldean Catholic Church as a violinist. Throughout her junior and senior years of high school, Marianne participated in National Honor Society and completed over 200 hours of service and helped plan charity events. She has also volunteered as a Catechism Teacher.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"As a first generation student, this scholarship means that I have accomplished exactly what I have wanted to since I started school, which was to make my parents, my community, and myself proud. I am starting a new generation who strives to be better and challenge the past. It acknowledges all of the hard work I have put into the community, and I am so grateful to have been recognized and honored."*

**SPONSORED BY: GREAT LAKES COCA-COLA**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: STADIUM MARKET**







## SKYLAR GETTY

Skylar is a freshman at Ohio State University studying psychology. She graduated from Neuqua Valley High School where she was named an Indian Prairie Scholar and an Illinois State Scholar for her academic achievements. In addition, Skylar received biliteracy in Spanish, which she took all four years of high school. She has played soccer for almost fourteen years and now contributes most of her time to working and spending quality time with loved ones.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Earning the MIR Foundation scholarship means earning the opportunity to ease the financial burden that comes with attending a university. It's also incredibly humbling to be accepted as a recipient, which will be used in an attempt to ease the transition into college. I am very grateful my company is a part of this organization who gives this opportunity to students."*

**SPONSORED BY: BORDEN DAIRY**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: PETER RUBI**



## CHRISTIAN R. JIDDOU

Christian is a freshman at Michigan State University pursuing an undergraduate degree in biochemistry and molecular biology. He has future plans of being a Doctor of Osteopath Medicine, focusing on health promotion and disease prevention. Christian graduated from Detroit Catholic Central High School where he was the captain for the junior varsity football team as well as the Northville Baseball Association. He received awards for National Honor Society (NHS), Gabriel Richard, and the 2020 Academic Excellence Achievement recognition. Christian is also an active member of HOSA, DECA, and NHS clubs.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am both honored and humbled to have been selected as a recipient of the MIR Foundation scholarship. It is a privilege to be recognized for all the hard work I have put in during my high school years. I will begin my undergraduate studies at Michigan State University this fall, and my educational pursuits would not have been possible without generous support from scholarship sponsors like MIRF. I am so thankful for this award that has been so generously given."*

**SPONSORED BY: LEE & MAXINE PECK FOUNDATION**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: CANTORO ITALIAN MARKET**



## ANNABELLE R. JOHNSON

Annabelle is a sophomore at Grand Rapids Community College studying math, science and engineering. She graduated from Lowell High School where she was part of National Honor Society, Odyssey of the Mind, and the Fusion Rock Orchestra where she played violin. Annabelle volunteered through the Rotary International Interact Club and Flat River Outreach Ministries and continues to volunteer through 4-H, where she has been a member for 8 years. She remains involved in Odyssey of the Mind as a judge.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am very thankful to have been selected as a recipient of this scholarship. While thinking about the classes I needed to take this coming school year, I began to feel anxious and wonder if I had enough money to pay for tuition, books, and class materials. Receiving this scholarship has relieved this anxiety and gives me the resources I need to continue my education and remain financially secure."*

**SPONSORED BY: MIDWEST INDEPENDENT RETAILERS FOUNDATION**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: HEIDI'S FARMSTAND & BAKERY**





## GRACE M. KANE

Grace is a sophomore at Saint Louis University (SLU) studying flight science with aspirations to be a corporate pilot. She graduated from Mercy High School where she played on the varsity volleyball team and was involved with student government, Spanish Honor Society, and National Honor Society. At SLU, she is on the club volleyball team and she manages the DI volleyball team. Grace is also a member of the Middle Eastern Student Association, as well as the aviation professional fraternity. She enjoys volunteering for Wings of Hope in St. Louis and mentoring aspiring female pilots. Currently, Grace is interning as a Flight Follower for Penta Star Aviation in Waterford, Michigan.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Receiving the MIRF Scholarship means so much to me as it will put me closer to my goals and allows me to continue to excel academically and in the aviation industry. It is a true honor to receive this scholarship and to know that numerous others are in support of my future aspirations."*

**SPONSORED BY: GREAT LAKES WINE & SPIRITS**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: PARKWAY FOODS**



**GREAT LAKES**  
*Wine & Spirits*



## KEVIN A. KATHAWA

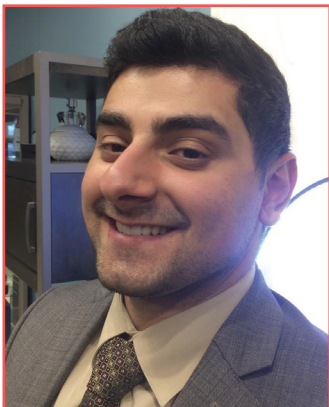
Kevin is a sophomore at the University of Detroit Mercy in the 7-year dental program, holding a 3.7 GPA for his freshman year. He graduated Summa Cum Laude with a cumulative GPA of 4.581 and ranked first in his graduating class as the Valedictorian. Kevin participated in the rigorous International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) at De La Salle Collegiate, logging over 200 hours of service for local organizations, such as Project Healthy Community and Brilliant Detroit. At Detroit Mercy, he volunteers his time to help others, including in his involvement in service-learning courses and specifically at the Christ Child House in Detroit.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"It is an honor to be recognized for my hard work and receive this very distinguished scholarship."*

**SPONSORED BY: GREAT LAKES COCA-COLA**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: MEMPHIS PARTY STORE**



## DONOVAN KHAMORO

Donovan is an Eastern Michigan University graduate with a bachelor of social work pursuing his master's degree at the University of Michigan in the fall of 2020. His concentration is political social work because of his passion and dedication to making societal changes for all citizens of Michigan and the nation. Donovan has taken his time with school because of his passion for making a difference in the lives of community members; doing things like church volunteering, summer camp counseling, assisting the homeless, and registering voters.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Receiving this award means that there are organizations that believe in members of the community and their ability to make a change to the future for the better."*

**SPONSORED BY: U.S. ICE CORP. - IN MEMORY OF FOAD ABBO**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: U.S. ICE**







## DUNYA J. KIZY

Dunya is a freshman at Grand Valley State University studying oncology pediatric nursing. She graduated from Mercy High School where she was an editor on the school newspaper and a member of student council, National Honor Society, Spanish Honors Society, and Link Crew. Dunya also played varsity softball and was captain her last two years. She volunteered for Special Assisted Learning (SAL) at her church and worked at the after-school program.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"This scholarship is not just another scholarship; it's a helping hand to bring me closer to my goal and closer to achieving greatness."*

**SPONSORED BY: KAR'S NUTS**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: PARTYVILLE LIQUOR**



## ANJOLI M. KONJA

Anjoli is a Junior at Ferris State University studying nursing, which has been a dream of hers since 7th grade. She graduated from Cabrini High School where she enjoyed being a part of the varsity tennis team, student council, and National Honor Society, as well as volunteering at Children with Hair Loss and her parish's catechism program. Anjoli is very eager to start her nursing classes and looks forward to her future working in a hospital.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am sincerely honored to have been selected as the recipient of the MIRF Scholarship. Your generosity towards my education will not only benefit me, but my community as well as my plans of becoming a nurse in the near future. I am extremely grateful to have been chosen this year and look forward to paying the generosity forward to the next generation."*

**SPONSORED BY: REPUBLIC NATIONAL DISTRIBUTING COMPANY**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: VREELAND MARKET**



## MAVERICK B. LAWRENCE

Maverick is a sophomore at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB) studying neuroscience. He graduated from Highland High School where he was a member of National Honor Society and many other various extracurricular activities. Maverick was recently accepted into the Hutton Honors College Program at IUB and president of the St. Jude Ambassadors club. He plans on continuing his education to pursue his passion of becoming a physician.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Being chosen as a recipient of MIRF Scholarship for a second year is an extremely humbling experience. I am beyond thankful to have been selected. As a hopeful future medical student, the number of loans you acquire is astounding. Receiving this scholarship will allow me to continue to work towards a long education."*

**SPONSORED BY: HARVEST SHERWOOD DISTRIBUTORS**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: HARVEST SHERWOOD DISTRIBUTORS**





## SUKHMAN S. PARHAR

Sukhman is a freshman at the University of Michigan studying neuroscience. He graduated from Hudson Area High School where he participated in the all-school play, first robotics and the debate team. Sukhman played on his school football and wrestling teams for three years. He was inducted into National Honor Society in his sophomore year, where he was president of his chapter, which opened the door to many volunteer opportunities.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Receiving this scholarship means that people believe in me academically and are willing to assist me through college so I can someday reach my dreams. It shows all my hard work is paying off and therefore motivates me to keep working hard in the future."*

**SPONSORED BY: DTE FOUNDATION**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: 127 PARTY STORE**

**DTE** Foundation



## JULIANA P. RABBAN

Juliana is a freshman at College for Creative Studies studying advertising design. She graduated from North Farmington High school and was a member of National Honor Society, copresident of CASA, HOSA, link leader, NSHSS, and the student board as well as being elected as secretary. Juliana has been a competitive dancer for fifteen years, in addition to being an artist since she could pick up a crayon. She recently started her own art business called Just by Juliana and has been creating custom artwork for clients. Juliana has also fundraised and donated to several cancer foundations and has volunteered for organizations such as Fleece & Thank You, and Angels Wear Gowns.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am extremely grateful to be the recipient of this scholarship. Receiving this scholarship is an honor, because it further enables me to attend my dream school, College for Creative Studies, and pursue my passion."*

**SPONSORED BY: EASTOWN DISTRIBUTORS**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: SAVE A LOT HAYES**



## EVAN W. ROGALLA

Evan is a senior at Grand Valley State University studying business management. He has been on the Dean's list every semester throughout college. Evan is a director for a non-profit organization called West Michigan Wildlife Association and he's also a middle school leader for his local church called Harvest-Spring Lake.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Winning this scholarship gives me the insight that anyone who works hard can achieve anything. All the years of striving for success in high school and throughout college has provided me wonderful opportunities such as winning this scholarship."*

**SPONSORED BY: DTE ENERGY**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: FRUITPORT ORCHARD MARKET**

**DTE**





## MITCHELL J. SCHOENJAHN

Mitchell is a senior at Grand Valley State University studying supply chain management and marketing. There, he is a member of the ski and snowboard club and stays active by participating in many intramural sports teams. Mitchell graduated from Lake Orion High School where he played football and was the captain of the varsity track & field team. He was a scholar athlete in both sports and received the coaches award on his track & field team. Mitchell also volunteers at Make a Difference Day, Mary Free Bed Hospital, and Gleaners.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am humbled and honored to receive the MIRF Scholarship. Receiving this generous scholarship is a reminder that all the hard work that I have put in the past three years of college is not going unnoticed. With the money received I plan to use it to help pay for my tuition and reduce the financial burden that comes with a higher education. This scholarship will continue to motivate me to work hard in school and spend time volunteering at places in need. Thank you for selecting me to receive the MIRF Scholarship."*

**SPONSORED BY: BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN**



## HANNAH L. SHEEDY

Hannah is a Sophomore at Grand Valley State University studying Accounting. There, she is a member of the Humane Society Club in addition to working for on-campus housing. Hannah graduated from Salem High School where she was a varsity swimmer on the swim and dive team. She also participated in various community service projects ranging from seasoning chickens at the Plymouth Rotary Club Annual Chicken Barbecue to organizing a fundraiser collecting over 200 pairs of socks for those in need in Downtown Detroit.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"It is an honor to be selected as a recipient of the MIRF Scholarship. With the aid of this award, I will be able to further my education at Grand Valley State University and reduce the costs of items required for my path toward my degree."*

**SPONSORED BY: FRANK G. ARCORI FOUNDATION**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: WESTBORN MARKET**



## CHRISTINA H. THOMAS

Christina is a sophomore at Oakland University (OU) majoring in biology with a concentration in pre-medicine. She graduated from Mercy High School as a Valedictorian/Salutatorian finalist and was Magna Cum Laude. Christina was a member of National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society. Additionally, she was a student government class officer, link crew commissioner, and a science club leader. Currently at OU, Christina is a student in the honors college and a member of the Chaldean Pre-Professional Health Club and the Chaldean American Student Association. In the near future, she plans to start a new job within the medical field and continue to volunteer in her local community.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am extremely appreciative and grateful towards the MIRF Scholarship. As a recipient of this award I am so thankful to be part of such a wonderful organization. I brought my grandfather to the scholarship luncheon last June and he was bursting with pride and love while watching me receive my award. Therefore, receiving the 2020 scholarship is so bittersweet to me because I lost my beloved grandfather recently. I know that he is smiling down at me from above when receiving this. Ultimately, I am accepting and dedicating this scholarship in memory of the beautiful soul of Frank Thomas."*

**SPONSORED BY: D&B GROCERS WHOLESALE & DISTRIBUTORS - IN MEMORY OF MICHAEL H. HESANO**  
**SUBMITTED THROUGH: HEATHER'S LIQUOR LAND**





## LUCY WEGLARZ

Lucy is a freshman at the University of Minnesota studying computer engineering with a minor in Spanish. She graduated from Wheaton North High School where she served as flute section leader in marching band. Lucy was also in the musicals, on the math team, a member of the speech team, as well as serving as an executive board member for Tri-M Music Honor Society. She volunteered for both St. Michael's Church and St. Petronille's Church, as well as for her school district's middle school band program.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am so grateful to be receiving this scholarship and that MIRF helped in funding my education. I am excited to see where my future takes me, in my college education and beyond."*

**SPONSORED BY: DTE FOUNDATION**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: TONY'S FRESH MARKET**

**DTE** Foundation



## JOSHUA M. WIRT

Joshua is a sophomore at Lake Superior State University studying fisheries and wildlife management. He graduated from Chesaning High School where he was captain of the varsity tennis and golf teams. Joshua was a member of National Honor Society and on the varsity swim team. He also volunteered with McBrite Manor, Chesaning Music Boosters, and the Chesaning Area Emergency Relief Center. In the future, Joshua hopes to further his education and acquire his PhD in wildlife biology.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"I am honored and grateful to be selected as a recipient of the MIRF Scholarship as it will help me further my education and help me achieve my goal of becoming a Wildlife Biologist."*

**SPONSORED BY: REPUBLIC NATIONAL DISTRIBUTING COMPANY**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: FRANK'S SUPERMARKET**

 **REPUBLIC NATIONAL**  
DISTRIBUTING COMPANY



## BRYCE J. YOUNG

Bryce is a Sophomore at Saginaw Valley State University working towards her bachelor's degree in Nursing. She graduated from Chippewa Hills High School where she was active in student council, student government and girls basketball.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO RECEIVE THE MIR FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP?

*"Receiving this scholarship is an amazing honor. Continuing my education and giving back to my community have always been my top priority. I come from a small, close knit, rural town where friends are considered family. I am proud to be a member of this community and look forward to someday taking my place."*

**SPONSORED BY: BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MICHIGAN**

**SUBMITTED THROUGH: GRINCH TIRE CENTER**

 **Blue Cross**  
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**Blue Care Network**  
of Michigan







# HOW TO OPERATE IN THE ***NEW NORMAL*** FOR REST OF YEAR

■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*

**L**ast month, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued a new executive order that essentially stated: “No shirts, no shoes, no mask — no service.”

Businesses will now be required to deny service to people who don’t wear masks indoors, with limited exceptions for individuals and houses of worship, according to the executive order signed by Governor Whitmer.

Under the Governor’s order, businesses that are open to the public must refuse entry and service to individuals who fail to comply, and must post signs at all entrances instructing customers of their legal obligation to wear a face covering while inside.

“We appreciate it,” said Eddie Aboona, owner of Seaway Market Place, with locations in Detroit and Toledo. “We are asking customers to have on masks and when they do not, we ask very nicely to put one on. We also sell them for 99¢ each. We already require shirts and shoes.”

Those who are exempt from wearing a mask in Michigan businesses include people younger than five years old, those who cannot medically tolerate a face covering, and those who are eating or drinking while seated at a food service establishment.

The executive order took effect on July 13th. A willful violation of the order is a misdemeanor subject to a \$500 criminal penalty, but no term of confinement may be imposed on individuals who violate the mask requirement. No individual is subject to penalty under the order for removing a mask while engaging in religious, although consistent with guidance from the CDC, congregants are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings during religious services.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on food retailers in both positive and negative ways. “We are struggling to find employees,” said Aboona. “We are paying them more to work but we have butchers and stock employees, for example, asking for high hourly rates.”

Aboona has been fortunate to have three children in college who are able to help at the stores. “They all have been working during this time,” he said. “I am lucky to have them, but not all store owners have family who can help.”

With the stimulus checks, some people are making more money staying home rather than working. “I wish congress would reward the people who are working and put people back to work,” he said. “We really need to give people an incentive to go back to work and reward people who worked during the pandemic.”



A photograph of three people—two men and one woman—smiling and looking towards the left. They are in a rustic setting with exposed wooden walls and black industrial-style pipes. The man on the left is holding a coffee cup. The woman is in the middle, and the man on the right is wearing a blue blazer. The overall mood is warm and positive.

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Although sales have increased for some products, there are still shortages. “Many suppliers are only offering top selling items,” said Aboona, “so we are limited on products.”

Prices are a challenge for retailers. “Some suppliers are not able to supply us with all the products we need,” he continued. “Prices on products have increased because of the pandemic and customers think that store owners are price gauging. Many wholesalers are not offering discounts on products they once did, like toilet paper, so the prices affect every aspect of the industry, from farmers, manufacturers, suppliers, grocers and customers.”

Aboona, like many in the business, expect this “new normal” to continue for at least another year. “Business is up about 20%, which is good,” he said. “However, people are still afraid to leave their homes or travel, so they are purchasing food at local stores and staying home.”

It’s strictly speculation to guess how long this will go on. “I would not be surprised if this goes on longer than a year,” said Ed Weglarz, MIRA President & CEO. “Retailers are going to need to be flexible and think about making changes in business and this might be forcing them to change certain practices, especially how they serve up food.”

Aboona had closed parts of his prepared food and deli sections of his stores during the pandemic. “We are slowly going back to normal,” he said.

They prepare cold cuts and are selling them at the counter. “Hot food items are about 80% of your deli sales in the inner city,” he said. “In the suburbs, cold cuts are about 80% of the deli sales, while prepared food is about 20%.”

Food service in grocery and c-stores has been a growing trend. “Prior to COVID-19, our stores have been trained in food safety,” said Weglarz. “Now, even more so, they want employees wearing gloves and masks. Cleanliness of a store is imperative, it depicts the character of a store. If customers see a dirty store, they are going to assume the food is dirty and how they handle the food is not healthy.”

Store owners will want to clean their stores from top to bottom. “I tried to carry that message to our members,” said Weglarz. “We have to remember that our industry is considered essential, while so many other businesses had to close.”

The COVID-19 quarantine created a surge in e-commerce. While much about COVID-19 and its long-term impact on businesses and the economy is unknown, its effect of a worldwide increase in a reliance on digital means to engage in business transactions, is undeniable and unlikely to decrease as we move forward, according to *WralTechWire*.

“Some of our retailers have been preparing and already engaging customers through e-commerce,” said Weglarz. “Offering the ability to purchase items online and pick up at the store will put retailers at an advantage.”

COVID-19 is a virus that infects both the upper and lower respiratory tract. That means it is contagious and can cause pneumonia. People who are infected initially develop a fever, cough and aches, and can progress to shortness of breath and complications from pneumonia, according to case reports. Other, less common symptoms included sore throat, headache, aches, chills, repeated shaking with chills, vomiting, diarrhea and nasal congestion. Some people report losing the senses of taste and smell.

Industry insiders are confident a vaccine will soon be available. According to a survey of 50 health-care executives and investors conducted by *Stifel*, nearly all expect a vaccine will eventually be approved in the U.S. More than half of those surveyed expect approval to occur late this year or in the first quarter of 2021.

What does this all mean to the independent retailers? “It means that our members will continue to operate differently for at least the rest of the year,” said Weglarz. “How owners are dealing with employee, customers and supplies are all being impacted by this virus.”

“We know how bad COVID-19 can be for some people,” said Aboona. “It’s a serious thing. We lost two employees from our Toledo store to COVID.”

According to a report in *The Wall Street Journal*, “regulatory approval is distinct from the vaccine actually reaching patients. After all, scaling up manufacturing to meet unprecedented demand is a huge challenge. Then there is the issue of priority: Members of the military, health-care personnel and other essential workers are likely to receive doses well before the general public. In the survey, 40% of respondents expect the vaccine to be available to all by late 2021, and 36% aren’t expecting that until 2022 or later.” ■

*\*Writers with Epiphany Communications and Coaching are content creators for the MIRA Bottom Line.*





## c-store news & views

JIM GREEN // MIRA VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

### Keeping Up

I ndependent retailers have always had to keep up with change, but the rate in which change is happening today can be overwhelming for many independent convenience store operators trying to keep up. Due to COVID-19, c-stores have had to rethink many of their practices and implement changes to ensure the safety of their employees and their customers. Most have installed plexiglass shields, hand sanitizer stations and implemented thorough cleaning and sanitizing procedures. These were all needed but this is only the first step. The COVID-19 pandemic has also caused many c-store retailers to accelerate the pace in which they are testing and implementing contactless solutions, mobile ordering, curbside pickup, and home delivery services in order to meet consumer's new expectations and be competitive in the market. These trends will continue, and independent retailers need to be thinking about what they can do to be more competitive in these areas.

When I read the daily updates from all the industry publications, it seems like not a day goes by without reading or hearing about a chain retailer launching a new app. While developing a mobile app is outside the reach of the average independent, there are solutions available for any business that wants to be in the digital space. The website [www.foottrafficbuilder.com](http://www.foottrafficbuilder.com) offers a Speed-to-Shelf digital marketing program, which is a great option for independents. They have an easy-to-use control panel. You can create your own custom promotion within minutes by simply taking a photo of a product, upload the image and type in the discount/promotion available at your store. The program will drive clicks and bring you customers through their digital marketing platform. Customers, close to your location, will find your promotions for food and beverage deals. Tecmark is another option

for independent retailers to consider. Their base level package makes it easy for a retailer to implement a fuel discount and promotion program that is simple for the consumer. Their premium level offers a point program, digital punch cards and unlimited communication to consumers using the program. While each operator needs to evaluate what is right for them, there are economically feasible solutions that allow independent retailers to compete in this environment. I would encourage operators to explore and implement a solution that works for them. As an independent, you have a tremendous advantage over large chain retailers. You can make changes very quickly and your investment can be small to start. You can modify for improvement or ramp up quickly after seeing success.

Another trend that continues to emerge with chain retailers who have robust food service offering, is partnering with Grubhub, Door Dash and Uber Eats. When looking at the *NACS State of the Industry Report*, top performing retailers with made-to-order food service offerings are experiencing food service sales that represent approximately 25% share of the in-store sales with nearly 40% of in-store gross profit dollar contribution. It is easy to see why retailers with this model have made this investment. However, this model may not be right for the average independent operators but, there are other things you should consider. I would urge members to try curbside delivery for their customers if you have not already. That is a trend that will be with us long after the coronavirus pandemic. Another hot topic is adding a drive thru. While it may not be feasible for many operators due to the current layout and construction of their stores, it is something for operators to evaluate. You are seeing more and more retailers implementing this. The Wawa convenience chain recently announced it was preparing to open its first drive-thru store. When I worked as a wholesaler, some of my largest independent customers were retailers with a drive-thru, which was years prior to the current pandemic. Many consumers just like the experience and will continue to want it. These recommendations require a commitment from the operator and before considering any of them, I recommend you ask your customers what they think and ask them for their feedback. ■



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- Plus and extra 1% if purchasing energy supplements
- Plus an additional 2% if purchasing foodservice products
- Plus an additional 2% if purchasing supplies

***Customer must purchase these categories to qualify:***

- Cigarettes
- Smokeless & other tobacco
- Energy supplements
- Coffee

*Subject to pre-qualification by McAneny Brothers*





# petroleum news & views

EDWARD WEGLARZ // MIRA PRESIDENT & CEO

## What Does the Future Hold?

**T**hat's the Jillion dollar question! As a petroleum and convenience store retailer, what does the future hold? The rules, laws, regulations, and executive orders seem to change every day. And, depending on the Mayor or Governor, the edicts can actually be in conflict with one another. Media coverage is confusing because it often reflects opinion rather than news.

This much I can tell you, it will be better to plan on long-term compliance with restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, than hope for a silver bullet short-term solution. Even a vaccine or wonder-drug will take months to produce, distribute and inoculate the population.

Plan to have signage posted that informs customers of their responsibility upon entering your store. Have your employees get used to wearing masks, cleaning, and sanitizing all areas of the store, and moving cleanliness up to the top of the priority list. Customers will judge your store based on actual and perceived cleanliness.

Get used to reduced gasoline volume. Many white-collar workers have been told they will be working from home through October, November, even April 2021. Other customers are not working at all! That means less commuter driving, resulting in lower gallons sold. Or the buzz phrase: "demand destruction".

If you set up a portion of your store in a haphazard manner to comply with COVID-19 restrictions, plan to upgrade to a more permanent and inviting setting. Shop around other similar stores in your trade area to see what other competitors have done; you can see what works and what doesn't.

Ask your c-store supplier salesman what different products and services are selling in this "new normal".



They'll be able to give you advice from a better cross-section of comparable retailers to help you restructure your offerings.

Look at your hours of operation. Do those need to be adjusted to better serve the revised travel patterns in and around your store? Who is actually working near your store? Some offices are closed while many small shops are operational. Check out their hours.

Don't let the appearance of your site deteriorate. Upgrade those home-made signs that you thought were only temporary. MIRA can recommend a sign company to satisfy your needs at a reasonable cost.

Have you thought of offering Full Service refueling? You might think I'm crazy, but some customers are averse to touching the fueling nozzle during the coronavirus pandemic. If you can devote one pump island to Full Service, it might worth a try.

You can complain about the COVID-19 situation and be negative, but the customer doesn't care, or be glad you can open for business and play the cards you've been dealt.

Above all, watch your email for the MIRA email blasts that provide real time information regarding laws, regulations, updates, and executive orders so you can remain compliant. MIRA is here to help. ■



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# government relations report

JUAN ESCAREÑO // MIRA DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## Trying to Clarify an Executive Order

*"Pressure groups are our oldest political inheritance."*

— WAYNE WHEELER

I have no public position on whether wearing a mask is a political ploy or based off sound scientific findings. I will say that science itself is not an absolute truth (in a classical scholastic sense), but a tool to be used to continue understanding how and why things behave as they do. I digress but this is my monthly soap box!

The responsibility and burden placed upon business owners to enforce a civil law is near impossible to enforce when culture dictates our actions. It harkens back to the days of Prohibition in my view. The law said one thing, but our cultural and behavior did something else.

I am placing our position on the matter to help you navigate the choppy waters. This tempest called the coronavirus has not ended and will only continue to impact our lives for months to come.

The Governor of Michigan has issued a new executive order requiring customers to wear a facemask or to be denied service. Due to the ambiguity of the new executive order, here are some frequently asked questions to help you navigate these issues so as to mitigate non-compliance by customers:

**1 Must I post a sign of the facemask requirement and do should I notify everyone entering my store that they are required to wear a facemask?**

Yes.

**2 Will law enforcement be issuing tickets and fines if our customers are non-compliant?**

At this time, law enforcement in various counties have stated that they will not be enforcing the facemask requirement issued by the governor.

**3 Must I refuse anyone that does not wear a facemask?**

The executive order asks you to refuse customers that are non-compliant, BUT there are exemptions for people with medical conditions to not wear a mask. You or your employees are not equipped to ask customers for medical information exempting them from a facemask. This could lead to an ADA violation.

Once a customer has been notified of the requirement and the customer notifies you that they cannot wear a mask for medical reasons, you have done everything reasonably within your power.

**4 Must my employees wear a facemask?**

Yes. It should be posted by the time clock that all employees are required to wear a facemask at all times while on the work premises. Non-compliance from an employee may lead to termination.

**5 What if an employee says they cannot wear a facemask for medical reasons?**

Ask for medical documentation excusing them from wearing a facemask. Once the documentation has been provided, discuss with your HR and/or attorney on how to proceed with sending your employee home since they cannot comply with the current work requirements.

**6 Must employees working behind bullet-proof or clear plastic panels wear masks?**

Yes. Order is not clear regarding such an employee working alone.

**7 What is MIRA doing to address this ambiguous mandate?**

MIRA is working with legislators to ask the Attorney General of Michigan for more clarity on dealing with customers claiming medical exemptions. We are diligently working to find answers and solutions to relieve your employees from having to become the enforcers of the executive order. ■



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# michigan liquor report

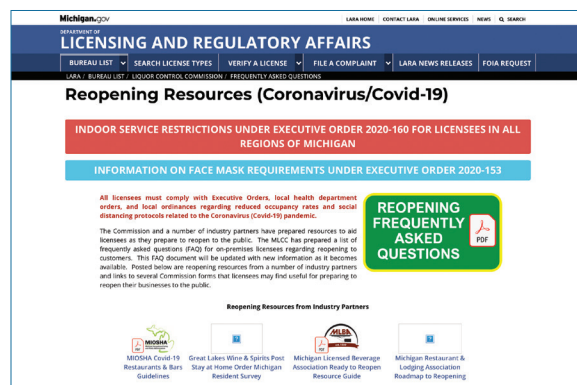
PAT GAGLIARDI // CHAIR, MICHIGAN LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION

## Michigan Liquor Control Commission – Focused Leadership in Uncertain Times

Over the last several months during this COVID-19 health crisis, the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) has been focused on helping the state's liquor licensees survive devastating economic losses and prepare for reopening in a safe, profitable and sustainable way.

Charting a course to get licensees from shutdown to reopening has been a long, tough road in a hospitality industry that's particularly vulnerable during this unprecedented time. The MLCC implemented Gov. Whitmer's one-of-a-kind spirits buyback program and we're pleased to report that more than \$3.3 million in financial relief went back to 670 bar and restaurant owners across the state. This financial lifeline averaged more than \$5,000 for hard-hit bars and restaurants. On-premises liquor licensees who took the 100% cash buyback for spirits they ordered from the MLCC prior to March 16, 2020, are keeping possession of the products the MLCC bought back -- for now, with no bottles being picked up. They have 90 days after the last emergency declaration is lifted to repurchase the inventory by selling it when they're back open for business. They will pay the MLCC back interest free.

With the move to outdoor dining across the country, the MLCC implemented a streamlined application process for outdoor service expansions and new requests for the 2020 summer season and additional bar permits. Since the May 19 launch, the MLCC has approved more than 800 outdoor service permits (limited and permanent), with more than another 150 applications in process. The MLCC also added a Specially Designated Merchant (SDM) license to an existing Class C license and allows for unopened beer and wine to be taken off-premises for consumption.



A new Reopening Resources webpage at [www.michigan.gov/lcc](http://www.michigan.gov/lcc) is now available to licensees who are in search of practical information and guidelines from trade associations and MIOSHA, along with the outdoor service applications. They can also read survey results from Michiganders to learn what patrons expectations are of the hospitality industry in this “new normal.”

Such changes are the direct result of a “Reopening Workgroup” chaired by MLCC Commissioners Ed Clemente and Brad Jacobsen who engaged stakeholders, liquor licensees and other interest groups from across the state. The group met virtually to share ideas and consider written suggestions from restaurant and bar owners on what they needed most to help them reopen their businesses. I thank all participants for their time, talent, invaluable input and ideas.

Moving forward, on-premises licensees are now seeing an increase in the percentage of discount on spirits purchased from the MLCC, thanks to legislation Governor Whitmer signed into law. The discount on spirits purchases from the MLCC increased from 17% to 23% on July 12, 2020, and is effective over the next 12 months.

On behalf of all the Commissioners, the MLCC looks forward to working with new MIRA President and CEO Ed Weglarz as we continue our fine association with MIRA. Congratulations, Ed! ■

*The mission of the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) is to make alcoholic beverages available for consumption while protecting the consumer and the general public through regulation of those involved in the sale and distribution of these alcohol beverage products.*

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# ohio lobbyist report

TERRY FLEMING // TC FLEMING & ASSOCIATES

## HB 606 Gets Interesting

This month's story deals with passing laws and the old saying, "if you like laws and sausage you should never watch how either are made." HB 606, in Ohio, is a prime example of this old adage. This bill came about back in February when a convenience store was sued by a person claiming to have caught COVID-19 at the store. MIRA immediately sent Ohio language to correct this, which was then given to the Ohio House and thus HB 606 was born. The bill, as introduced, would prohibit any lawsuit against an essential employee or business regarding COVID-19, through January 1, 2021. The bill had a number of hearings in the House and, as expected, the trial lawyers and labor unions were not happy but, the essential businesses were very supportive. The bill eventually passed out of committee and went to the House floor. It was here that labor had an amendment added that would require Ohio Workers' Comp to pay for all essential worker's medical bills, if they contracted the virus while working. The bill then passed overwhelmingly and was sent to the Senate. After a month of hearings, the Senate passed the bill out of committee. However, two business groups were successful in removing the Workers' Comp amendment and added an amendment that extended the deadline from January 1, 2021, to April 30, 2021.

This is where it gets interesting. The bill has an emergency clause, which means upon the Governor's signature it becomes effective immediately. The Speaker of the House is not sure he has the two-thirds vote needed to pass the bill as an emergency, because democrats want the Workers' Comp language



included. He needs 66 yes votes and he's not sure all 61 republicans will return for a vote due to being scared of contracting the virus. So, as of now, he's saying he won't be back until September. This means businesses could be open to lawsuit in July, August and September, and without the emergency clause, the bill would not be effective for 90 days after the Governor's signature.

Wait, there's more, both Houses previously passed SB 55, a bill to toughen penalties for drug pushers, but language was inserted that would not allow penalties being imposed on essential businesses that violate Governor's orders on COVID-19. It appears the Governor will veto this bill and the Speaker of the House has told the Ohio Senate that if they override the bill, he will bring the House back in July and will address HB 606 at same time. If this sounds like Abbot and Costello's "Who's on First", you are right. MIRA supports both bills and we will let you know how it all turns out. ■



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For more information on Team Sledd, call the office at **800.333.0374**  
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# illinois lobbyist report

STEPHEN S. MORRILL // MORRILL & ASSOCIATES, PC

## Illinois Legislative Activity

### **CITY OF CHICAGO – JULY 2020 SEES BEGINNING OF FAIR WORK WEEK AND INCREASE IN MINIMUM WAGE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Since the Fair Work Week (FWW) ordinance was approved in 2019, MIRA has been working with allies and the City's Business Affairs and Consumer Protection division (BACP) to help formulate rules that would properly implement the ordinance. MIRA provided guidance on how BACP should accommodate retailers additional flexibility and not require additional predictability pay when an employee begins work early, or leaves work late, by as much as 15 minutes of a shift (as is normal for many employees). MIRA also ensured the rules clearly identified: (a) the threshold of when a shift change is agreed to by an employee that does not require additional predictability pay; and (b) predictability pay does not apply when employees that request day-night shifts as part of the schedule.

MIRA also believes there is still more work to be done to improve FWW for all Chicago retailers, but especially grocers. Of importance is exempting grocers from FWW when a schedule needs to be changed due to supply disruptions that are not the fault of the employer, and when schedules need to be adjusted due to impending inclement weather.

July 1, 2020, also saw the City's minimum wage increase to \$14/hour, and is set to increase to \$15/hour next year on July 1, 2021.

### **STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION TRUNCATED DUE TO COVID-19 GROCERS "ESSENTIAL" SINCE DAY ONE**

COVID-19 has had a profound impact on every state in the nation; Illinois being no exception. In March, Governor Pritzker issued the initial "Stay-at-Home" (SAH) order that required multiple businesses to shut down and employees to "work remotely when possible" except for those deemed "essential businesses." Grocery stores have been deemed "essential" since the beginning, and Morrill & Fiedler have been advising MIRA members on how grocers have been impacted through every stage – from the initial SAH order to the current Phase 4 guidelines (both the Illinois Restore Illinois guidelines and the City's Reopening Chicago guidelines).

While governmental entities were considered "essential," almost all state and local government activity was suspended for the first few weeks until guidelines were established to hold public hearings remotely. The Illinois General Assembly canceled its entire 2020 spring legislative session, and only held a four-day special session to address the FY21 state budget and "essential" legislative items that related to Illinois' COVID-19 response. Among the items addressed during the special COVID-19 session were changes to expand healthcare coverage, workers compensation coverage, and unemployment insurance benefits to those impacted by COVID-19.

Two additional items in which M&F successfully advocated for, on behalf of MIRA, during the special session: (a) not allowing a reduction in the "retailer's discount" from collecting state sales tax – a cost of \$145 million to state retailers; and (b) supporting the use of SNAP benefits for online grocery purchases – which was approved as a permanent programmatic change on June 2nd.

Upon adjourning the 2020 special COVID-19 session, the Illinois General Assembly is not scheduled to reconvene until November 17, 2020 for its fall veto session.

### **ON THE HORIZON**

MIRA faces a new day with the transition of Auday Arabo as the face and leader of MIRA. Under his successful direction, MIRA and M&F have developed MIRA and its Illinois members into the "voice" of the independent retailers with city and state elected officials. M&F is confident that MIRA's voice in Illinois will only continue to grow louder under the direction of Ed Weglarz in the years to come. The Illinois members of MIRA, as well as M&F, will always be grateful to Auday and his vision to grow the influence of the independent grocer community.

In 2020/2021, MIRA is looking to utilize its growing influence to work on two proactive initiatives: (a) a local Cook County property tax credit for grocery stores that locate in "food deserts" – one that MIRA intends to extend statewide; and (b) broadening state incentive programs that seek to provide people with greater access to local fresh food to include supermarkets.

We look forward to serving MIRA and its members, continuing MIRA's success, and expanding its influence in Illinois. ■

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MICHIGAN //

## Executive Order Closes Indoor Service at Bars, but Bill Allows for Cocktails-To-Go



■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*

Just weeks after opening, bars in Michigan, once again, were ordered to close their doors for inside service.

“If your receipts are 70% or more from alcohol, you had to close again,” said Mark Solomon, owner of Kwicky Bar in Detroit. “That is the case for me and so after two weeks of being open, I had to close my doors.”

The order doesn’t bother Solomon as much as the lack of consistency and regulations. “There are several bars that are similar to my business that are finding loop holes to stay open or are just defying the order,” he said.

Solomon fully supported the Governor’s decision to close

businesses back in March. “It was necessary,” he said, “even though, it drastically hurt my business. However, this time around, I don’t think it was well thought out. I don’t understand what makes breweries, vineyards or bars that have 30% or more in food sales any safer than my establishment. We were setup and following all CDC and state guidelines. I don’t think it’s fair that a few bars breaking the rules should cause all the other bars that were following the rules, to be forced to shut down again.”

On July 1st, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed Executive Order 2020-143, closing indoor service at bars throughout most of lower Michigan to protect the progress Michigan has made against COVID-19.

The Upper Peninsula and much of northern Michigan are excluded from the order, and bars statewide can continue to serve outdoors. The governor also signed a package of bills allowing cocktails-to-go at bars and restaurants to help these businesses serve more Michiganders during this time.

“We owe it to our front-line heroes who have sacrificed so much during this crisis to do everything we can to slow the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the chance of a resurgence like we are seeing in other states,” said Governor Whitmer. “Following recent outbreaks tied to bars, I

am taking this action to slow the spread of the virus and keep people safe. If we want to be in a strong position to reopen schools for in-person classroom instruction this fall, then we need to take aggressive action right now to ensure we don’t wipe out all the progress we have made.”

As restaurants and bars started to resume operations in some areas of the United States, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) offered guidelines for ways operators can protect employees, customers, and communities and slow the spread of COVID-19.

Restaurants and bars can determine, in collaboration with state and local health officials, whether and how to implement these considerations, making adjustments to meet the needs and circumstances of the local community.

To Solomon, it is unclear who is in charge of enforcement. “We have no idea who is enforcing these orders, the state or the city. We also have no timeline on when to expect to be able to reopen,” he noted.

Meanwhile the CDC claims that “implementation should be guided by what is feasible, practical, acceptable, and tailored to the needs of each community. These considerations are meant to supplement—not replace—any state, local, territorial, or tribal health and safety laws, rules, and regulations with which businesses must comply.”



Recently, every region in Michigan has seen an uptick in new cases, and daily case counts now exceed 20 cases per million in the Grand Rapids, Lansing and Kalamazoo regions. Nearly 25% of diagnoses in June were of people ages 20 to 29, up from roughly 16% in May. That shift aligns with national trends, and the evidence suggests that young people may be driving a new phase of the pandemic.

As bars have reopened for indoor service across the country, some have been linked to a growing number of large outbreaks. In Michigan, for example, health officials in Ingham County have linked 107 confirmed COVID-19 cases to an outbreak in a single bar in East Lansing. Similar super-spreader events have been documented in bars in Florida, Louisiana and Texas.

Bars are often crowded, indoors and poorly ventilated — all of which make it easy to spread COVID-19 from person to person. Bars also encourage mingling among groups and facilitate close contact over an extended period of time. They are noisy, requiring raised voices and allowing for more projection of viral droplets. And they serve alcohol, which reduces inhibitions and decreases compliance with mask use and physical distancing rules.

“I urge all Michiganders to double down on mitigation tactics like wearing masks, practicing physical distancing, and washing hands, so we can get our trajectory headed in the right direction again,” said Governor Whitmer. “If we open up our economy

too quickly, the efforts of the last three months will be for nothing and we will have to go through this pain all over again and put our economy, health and medical system at risk. Nobody wants to move backward. Everyone, please do your part, and let’s show the nation and the world how smart we are.”

The Governor’s order applies to establishments with on-premises retailer liquor licenses that earn more than 70% of their gross receipts from alcohol sales. That means that most brewpubs, distilleries, and vineyards can stay open indoors. Traditional bars, nightclubs, and strip clubs will have to end indoor service.

“It’s not just about being compliant,” said Solomon, “We do want to be safe. The last thing we want is a breakout of COVID-19 in our establishment. That would be devastating to our employees, customers and business. It’s hard to follow the rules knowing we are hurting our business and taking away our employees’ main source of income, while I see other establishments breaking the rules.”

Governor Whitmer also signed Senate Bill 942 and House Bills 5781 and 5811 into law, which allow bars and restaurants to sell cocktails-to-go and expand social districts to allow for more outdoor seating and areas for people to safely congregate while practicing physical distancing.

“Bars will not have to close down completely, but may still offer outdoor seating and use creative methods like cocktails-to-go in hopes that we can bring

our numbers down,” Governor Whitmer said. “I am hopeful providing options for cocktails-to-go and expanded social districts will ensure these businesses can remain open and Michiganders can safely and responsibly enjoy their summer outdoors.”

That new bills prompt more questions. “Personally it doesn’t make sense to me. How does people taking liquor to go and offering it at buy-one-get-one-free help a small bar afford to stay open,” Solomon said.

He continued, “back in the 80s, ‘Happy Hour’ was popular and they stopped it saying it was encouraged people to drink more. You order one beer, you automatically have two in front to you and if your buddy buys you a drink you have two more and now you drank four beers when you only planned to have one. 9 out of 10 times, they are going to drink all four. They are allowing that again? Between that and the Drink to Go, I don’t see how that helps business and I think that will promote drinking and driving.”

However, Solomon believes the increase in discounts offered to businesses for wholesale liquor will help his business once he is able to open again. “They increased the discounts from 17% to 23%.”

Solomon is able to wait it out short term having a successful business for many years, but he stated he is unsure what is going to happen long term. ■

*\*Writers with Epiphany Communications and Coaching are content creators for the MIRA Bottom Line.*





## Joe Bellino, Jr. Says Goodbye to his Monroe Business

■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*

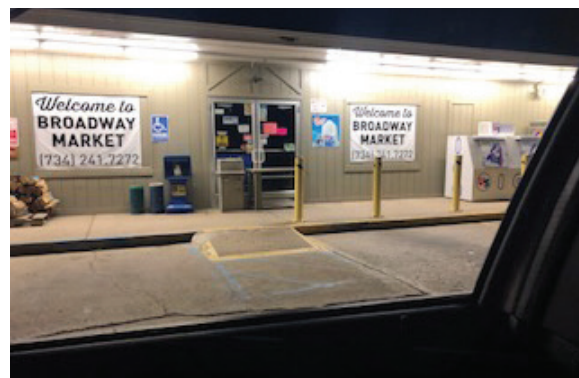
**S**elling the business that has been in the family since 1954 was bittersweet for Joe Bellino, Jr. “My grandfather, a beer distributor, bought it and sold it the next day to his sister and brother in law,” he said. “I purchased the business in 1998 from my cousins, so the family history and the connection to the great Monroe community has stopped with this year’s sale.”

Bellino, Jr., known for his engaging personality and signature nickname for friends, “Babe,” has been splitting his time in Lansing and Monroe since 2016, when he was first elected to the Michigan House of Representatives. He represents the 17th District, which covers portions of Wayne and Monroe counties, including the cities of Monroe, Flat Rock and Rockwood, the townships of Ash, Berlin, Exeter, Frenchtown, London, Sumpter, as well as a portion of Monroe Township.

Bellino, Jr. started working his freshman year in high school, “working in the summers cleaning Monroe Catholic Central to help pay for my \$700 tuition,” he explained. “Watching my dad work to provide for his family instilled in me an ethic that can’t be taught in school.”

Bellino, Jr. noted that working seven days a week was never a burden. “I will miss hiring high school students and watching them grow and mature into adults who care about their communities,” he said. “That has been the best.”

His family always had a commitment to the community. “Giving back to the community is what it is about when you own a small business,” he said. He and his wife Peg are proud of their community



involvement. “The last Thursday we were open, a group of ladies representing Recovery Advocacy Warriors (RAW), perched a table in front of the store and gave out bags, masks, lip balm, hand sanitizers and stress balls. Simple deeds to help bring awareness to the drug problem in Michigan.”

Like many small business owners, the Bellino’s got to know their customers well. “We will miss laughing and giving the people a hard time, which was our trademarks when anyone walked into Broadway, he said with chuckle and smile. “We became friends with hundreds and hundreds of loyal customers and then the passer-by customers who stopped in to remanence about shopping at our store when they were kids or how their grandmother lived nearby and she would bring them to the store to buy candy and other treats, those are all memories now part of us.”

After 22 years, the Bellino’s leave behind a Monroe legacy and great stories. “We knew after the ‘16 election it would be tough to run the store and serve



the people, so we started the process of selling back then,” he said. “It turns out the store was a great meeting point. People knew where I was on non-session days and if something needed to be taken care of, they knew where to find me. Turns out the store was a great asset for election and re-election, because of my contact with people.”

Peggy and Joe are at peace with the decision to sell. “You plan the work, work the plan and don’t look back,” he said.

The couple now have more time to spend with the grandkids, “and getting re-elected are the only short-term goals I have right now,” he said. “If I spend six years in Lansing, working hard for my family, my district and God, that would be the best!”

Now that car insurance reform is off the table, reforms in sentencing guidelines are on the top of his agenda. “It is amazing what we did in the 80’s and 90’s to incarcerate folks,” he said. “Non-violent offences sending people away for 20-40 years. As an addict in recovery, I know most of these offences were caused by their addiction or a mental health condition and don’t warrant end of life sentences.”

As a recovering alcoholic, Bellino, Jr. says he is a lucky man to have a large group of sober friends. “We go to 12 step meetings, golf and do a number of assorted things together.”

His daughter Mary Catherine has two girls, Lucy, 5, and Josephine (JoJo), 3, and his other daughter Annie Christine has two boys, Rory, 6 and Eli, 1. “They both live in Michigan,” he said. “My youngest daughter Meg, lives in Santa Barbara and she is expecting in November. “So, between staying sober, grandkids and a wonderful wife of 37 years, I am blessed.”

Bellino recalls that his almost 15 years on the MIRA board a great learning experience. “That and my 16 years on the Monroe County Community College Board of Trustees are what got me ready for Lansing,” he said. “Prepping me on how to handle situations, kind of like ‘training wheels’ for Lansing. I consider all the MIRA leaders during those days as mentors. Even if they were all named BABE!” ■

*\*Writers with Epiphany Communications and Coaching are content creators for the MIRA Bottom Line.*







## Back With the Association in a New Position

■ BY EPIPHANY COMMUNICATIONS AND COACHING\*

In March 2013, Karen Walker was hired as the association's Accounting Manager. She worked for 11 months "and truly enjoyed working for the organization," she said. "As a mom with two young boys, I felt like they needed me to work closer to home. A job opening with Oakland Schools came up that allowed me the opportunity to support my family."

Although she left the association, she kept in contact with the team throughout the years including with Auday Arabo, Ed Weglarz and Ila Konja. "My connection felt real and this new offer felt right at this point in my career," she said.

In May, an opportunity opened with MIRA, emerging from the sale of Benchmark, and she was offered the position of Comptroller. In this position, she establishes checks and balances that creates the best cashflow.

"My goal as the new Comptroller, is to support MIRA in all aspects of financial accounting, membership, human resources, and general office duties," she said. "I look forward to working alongside our new President, Ed Weglarz, as we pave the way for a 'new normal' in supporting our members during these unprecedented times."

Like everyone else, she is dealing with the new normal that COVID-19 created. "The 'new normal' is a constant reminder to everyone that patience is a virtue. We are all in this together with an ever-evolving way of life" she said.



When she is not working, she enjoys spending time with family, friends, traveling, and cooking. "I attend church and keep the Lord as my constant faith in my life," she said. "In addition, I occasionally volunteer at political events to support our state representatives when needed."

She has developed a strong desire to become certified in the management of non-profit organizations. "With my new position at MIRA, I believe this unique opportunity will present that chance in my career," she said. "It is so nice to be back with an organization that strongly supports the hardworking people and business owners in our communities. I truly enjoy being part of a team that works for the greater cause." ■

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SpartanNash ..... (616) 878-2248  
T.I. Spices, Inc./Amal Distributing ..... (586) 790-7100  
UNFI West Region. .... (262) 942-3387  
Value Wholesale Distributors ..... (248) 967-2900

## HISPANIC PRODUCTS

La Preferida, Inc. .... (773) 254-7200

## HOTELS, CONVENTION CENTERS & BANQUET HALLS

Genoa Banquet Center ..... (517) 545-1000  
Penna's of Sterling. .... (586) 978-3880  
Petruszello's ..... (248) 879-1000  
Suburban Collection Showplace ..... (248) 348-5600

## ICE CREAM SUPPLIERS

Nestle DSD (Small format only) ..... (616) 291-8999  
 Prairie Farms Ice Cream Program .....  
..... 1-800-399-6970 ext. 200

Velvet Ice Cream Co. .... (740) 892-3921  
Blue Bunny Ice Cream ..... (616) 453-6358  
Cedar Crest Dairy, Inc. .... (616) 7971103

## ICE PRODUCTS

U.S. Ice Corp. ..... (313) 862-3344  
Arctic Glacier Premium Ice. .... 1-800-327-2920  
Home City Ice ..... (513) 598-3738  
Taylor Ice Co. .... (313) 295-8576

## INSURANCE SERVICES: COMMERCIAL

Conifer Insurance Company (Liquor Liability) (248) 559-0840  
Globe Midwest/Adjusters International ..... (248) 352-2100  
Insurance Advisors, Inc. .... (248) 694-9006

## INSURANCE SERVICES: HEALTH & LIFE

BCBS of Michigan ..... (313) 448-2756  
 Blue Care Network ..... (248) 799-6300  
Business Benefits Resource, LLC. .... (248) 482-8282

## INSURANCE SERVICES: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Conifer Insurance Company ..... (248) 559-0840  
 CareWorks ..... 1-800-837-3200 ext. 7188

## LEGAL SERVICES

Bellanca Beattie, PC ..... (313) 882-1100  
Cummings, McCloy, Davis & Aho, PLC ..... (734) 261-2400  
Dawda, Mann, Mulcahy & Sadler, PLC ..... (248) 642-6961  
Denha & Associates, PLLC ..... (248) 265-4100  
Kullen & Kassab, PC ..... (248) 538-2200  
Lippitt O'Keefe Advisors, LLC ..... (248) 646-8292  
Willingham & Cote, PC ..... (517) 351-6200

## LIQUOR SHELF TAGS

Saxon, Inc. ..... (248) 398-2000

## LOTTERY

All-Star Gaming ..... (855) 772-4646  
IGT Global Solutions ..... (517) 272-3302  
Michigan Lottery ..... (517) 335-5648  
Ohio Lottery ..... 1-800-589-6446

## MILK, DAIRY & CHEESE PRODUCTS

 **Borden Dairy**  ..... (216) 214-7342  
 **Lipari Foods, Inc.** ..... (586) 447-3500  
 **Prairie Farms Dairy Co.**  ..... (248) 399-6300  
Cedar Crest Dairy, Inc. .... (616) 797-1103  
LaLa Branded Products (*Lipari*) ..... 1-866-648-5252  
Harvest Sherwood ..... (313) 659-7300

## MONEY ORDERS

 **Retailers Express Money Orders** ..... 1-800-666-6233

## OFFICE SUPPLIES & PRODUCTS

 **Office Depot** ..... (855) 337-6811





## PAPER PRODUCTS & PACKAGING SUPPLIES

Cartotecnica Cambianese Srl .....  
daniele@cartotecnicaCambianese.it



## PET SUPPLIES MISC.

 **Great Lakes Pet Treats** ..... (810) 715-4500

## PIZZA SUPPLIERS

 **Omni Food Concepts**   ..... 1-888-367-7829  
 **Tringale's Pizza Pinwheels** (*Lipari*) ..... (248) 943-5090  
Hunt Brothers Pizza ..... (615) 259-2629

## POINT OF SALE & RETAIL TECHNOLOGY

 **Great Lakes Data Systems** (*LOC Software*) .....  
..... (248) 356-4100 ext. 107  
 **Petrosoft LLC** ..... (412) 306-0640  
BMC-Business Machines Company ..... (517) 485-1732  
Success Systems ..... 1-800-653-3345


## PRINTING, PUBLISHING & SIGNAGE

 **Saxon, Inc.**  ..... (248) 398-2000  
CLE Billboards ..... (216) 801-9924  
EGI Solutions ..... (586) 978-9630  
Fisher Printing ..... (708) 598-1500  
Pace Custom Printing. .... (248) 563-7702


## PRODUCE DISTRIBUTORS

Anthony Marano Company ..... (773) 321-7500

## PROPANE

 **Blue Rhino** ..... (989) 345-0170  
Pinnacle Propane Express ..... (847) 406-2021

## REAL ESTATE

 **Sell Your Business Program** ..... 1-800-666-6233  
NAI Farberman ..... (248) 351-4386  
Trade World Consulting. .... (614) 332-8762


## REFRIGERATION SOLUTIONS (COMMERCIAL)

Cooler Fabrications ..... 1-800-396-1480  
Raves Cooler Doors ..... (248) 887-0648  
Sprint Business ..... (248) 893-8017

## RETAIL CONSULTING

White Knight Marketing. .... (901) 494-1352

## RETAIL FIXTURES, DISPLAYS & FLOORING

 **Display Max** ..... (810) 494-0400  
Mitchell's Flooring ..... (248) 887-4864

## REVERSE VENDING MACHINES & SERVICE

UBCR, LLC. .... (248) 529-2605

## SECURITY, SURVEILLANCE & MORE

Netco Services ..... (248) 850-2228

## SODA POP, WATER, JUICES & OTHER BEVERAGES

 **Coca-Cola Refreshments** (*Metro Detroit program*) .....  
..... **Metro Detroit**  **(313) 868-2008**  
..... Belleville  **(734) 397-2700**  
..... Flint  **(810) 237-4000**  
..... Cleveland  **(216) 690-2653**

 **Faygo Beverages, Inc.**  ..... **(313) 925-1600**  
Amica Tea LLC ..... (312) 796-7445  
Boom Boom Energy ..... (313) 722-2221  
Monster Energy Company ..... (800) 426-7367  
Pepsi Beverages ..... Detroit 1-800-368-9945  
..... Howell 1-800-878-8239  
..... Pontiac (248) 334-3512  
..... Cleveland (216) 252-7377  
..... Twinsburg (330) 963-5300  
Smart Life LLC ..... (248) 466-0770



## TOBACCO ALTERNATIVES

Bumble CBD ..... (216) 854-0090  
Grinds Coffee Pouches. .... (412) 414-3155  
Swisher International ..... (904) 607-7405

## TOBACCO COMPANIES & PRODUCTS

Altria Client Services ..... (513) 831-5510  
R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company ..... (336) 741-0727  
Xcaliber International ..... (918) 824-0300

## UNIFORMS, LINENS, WORK WEAR & SUPPLIES

 **Detroit Chemical & Paper Supply /**  
**1st Impressions** ..... **(586) 558-8805**  
 **UniFirst Corporation** ..... **(888) 256-5255 ext. 232**  
Socks Galore Wholesale ..... (248) 545-7625

## WASTE DISPOSAL & RECYCLING

 **Midwest Recycling**   (*Clothing recycle boxes*) .....  
..... **(313) 304-9099**  
Commercial Waste Systems (*Cardboard recycling buyers*) .....  
..... (219) 663-5678  
Stamper Facility ..... (586) 228-6500

## WINE & SPIRITS COMPANIES

 **Benchmark Beverage Co.** ..... **(734) 744-6132**  
Cheurlin Champagne ..... (312) 929-2699  
Cornerstone Wine Distributor ..... (586) 839-2552  
Endless West ..... (313) 590-7491  
Heaven Hill Distilleries ..... 1-800-348-1783  
Luxco ..... (313) 333-4637  
Proximo Spirits ..... (810) 278-0599  
Remy Cointreau USA ..... (248) 347-3731  
Tenute Delogu ..... info@tenutedelogu.com  
Wise Men Distillery ..... (616) 805-7003

## WINE & SPIRITS DISTRIBUTORS

European Wine Imports of Ohio, LLC ..... (216) 426-0979  
Great Lakes Wine & Spirits ..... 1-888-860-3805  
Lagniappe Beverage ..... (773) 358-2344  
RNDC of Michigan ..... 1-888-697-6424

## FOOD RESCUE / FOOD BANKS

### MICHIGAN

Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank  
..... (616) 784-3250  
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -  
Benton Harbor ..... (269) 983-7229  
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -  
Cadillac ..... (231) 779-0056  
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -  
Ishpeming ..... (906) 485-4988  
Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank -  
Sault Ste. Marie ..... (906) 632-0348  
Food Bank of Eastern Michigan ..... (810) 239-4441  
Food Bank of South Central Michigan .. (269) 964-3663  
Food Gatherers ..... (734) 761-2796  
Forgotten Harvest ..... (248) 967-1500  
Gleaners Community Food Bank ..... (866) GLE-ANER  
Greater Lansing Food Bank ..... (517) 908-3680  
Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes ..... (269) 343-3663  
The Manna Food Project ..... (231) 347-8852  
Western Upper Peninsula Food Bank ... (906) 482-5548

### OHIO

Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank .... (330) 535-6900  
Cleveland Foodbank ..... (216) 738-2265  
The Foodbank, Inc. .... (937) 461-0265  
Freestore Foodbank ..... (513) 482-4500  
Mid-Ohio Foodbank ..... (614) 274-7770  
SE Ohio Foodbank & Kitchen ..... (740) 767-4500  
Second Harvest Food Bank of Clark, Champaign and  
Logan Counties ..... (937) 325-8715  
Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio  
..... (440) 960-2265  
Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley  
..... (330) 792-5522  
Shared Harvest Foodbank ..... (800) 352-3663  
Toledo Northwestern Ohio Food Bank ... (419) 242-5000  
West Ohio Food Bank ..... (419) 222-7946

### ILLINOIS

Central Illinois Foodbank ..... (217) 522-4022  
Eastern Illinois Foodbank ..... (217) 328-3663  
Greater Chicago Food Depository ..... (773) 247-3663  
Northern Illinois Foodbank ..... (630) 443-6910  
Peoria Area Food Bank ..... (309) 671-3906  
River Bend Foodbank ..... (563) 345-6490  
St. Louis Area Foodbank ..... (314) 292-6262  
Tri-State Foodbank ..... (812) 425-0775







**AUGUST 12, 2020**

## MIRA'S 44TH ANNUAL MICHIGAN GOLF OPEN

A day on the course includes breakfast, lunch, 18 holes of golf and samples at every hole! Last year we sold out! Sponsorship opportunities are available.

*Fox Hills Golf & Banquet Center // Plymouth, MI*



**AUGUST 25, 2020**

## MIRA'S 15TH ANNUAL OHIO GOLF OUTING

This outing is a social event where retailers, wholesalers, manufacturers and service providers all come together to have a little competitive fun. A day on the course includes breakfast, dinner and 18 holes of golf!

*Shale Creek Golf Club // Medina, OH*



**SEPTEMBER 22, 2020**

## MIRA'S 22ND ANNUAL HOLIDAY FOOD & BEVERAGE BUYING SHOW

As Michigan's largest liquor show, retailers and on- and off-premise licensees come from miles to see, sample and buy a wide variety of new products. Admission for MIRA members is free. Must be 21 years or older to attend this show.

*Ultimate Soccer Arena // Pontiac, MI*



**NOVEMBER 2020**

## MIRF'S "HIGH FIVE" TURKEY DRIVE

As the holiday season approaches, the Midwest Independent Retailers Foundation turkey drive committee has pledged to put a turkey on the Thanksgiving table of over 6,000 needy families throughout Michigan, Ohio and Illinois that may not otherwise enjoy this special meal.

*Michigan // Ohio // Illinois*

## publishers statement

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