



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Maureen Saxton
maureen@vandykehorn.com
517.507.5037

MI Spirits Association Announces New Board of Directors

LANSING, MI – Sam Awdish, of Howell, was named President of the Michigan Spirits Association (MSA) at its recent board meeting in Novi. Awdish is currently the Vice President of Sales-Control States for Casamigos Spirits Company, founded by George Clooney, Rande Gerber and Mike Meldman. Casamigos is the fastest growing tequila company in the country, producing Casamigos Blanco Tequila, Casamigos Reposado Tequila, Casamigos Anejo Tequila and the newly released Casamigos Mezcal. Awdish and has served the MSA in various capacities over the last 11 years, most recently as Vice President. Awdish will take the helm in January for a two-year term. Tony Mitchell, of Redford, National Accounts Manager for Infinium Spirits, will serve as immediate past president.

Other officers elected to serve on the MSA Board of Directors for 2018-19 include:

- Conrad Haremza, of Commerce, will serve as Vice President. He is Regional Manager of MI & OH for Proximo Spirits
- Brian Pizzuti, of Howell, will serve as Treasurer. He is the Vice President of Sales for Republic National Distributing Company of MI (RNDC).
- Jacqueline Fonti, of Livonia, will serve as Secretary. She is a Sales Consultant for Broken Shed Vodka
- Jared Rapp, of Traverse City, will serve as Director representing the Small Distillers. He is a Co-Founder of Traverse City Whiskey Co.

Elected Directors:

- Jason Piwko, of Rochester Hills; Regional Sales Manager for Stoli Group.
- Kevin Wood, of Raleigh; Vice President of Control States, William Grant & Sons.
- George Zrinyi, of Commerce; Regional Manager MI, NC, VA, Agave Loco/RumChata.

Elected Alternate Directors:

- Lisa Hebert, of Ann Arbor; Senior Market Manager for Remy Cointreau USA.
- Brian Bulles, of Novi; National Accounts Manager for Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits
- Paul Wolfe, of Clawson; State Manager, Bacardi USA.
- David Kelly, of Macomb, State Manager, Beam-Suntory
- Rick Kral, of Novi, Regional Sales Manager – Michigan, Control States Division

Established in 1967, the MSA represents the vendors, suppliers, small distillers and distributors of distilled spirit products in Michigan. The MSA partners with the Michigan Liquor Control Commission and the Michigan Legislature to support, advocate, and educate for the responsible consumption of spirits that are crafted, produced and or sold in the state of Michigan in manners consistent with the quality standards of the industry. Additionally, the MSA supports the prevention of underage drinking by advocating for vigilant enforcement of state law and strict penalties for violations.

Members of the MSA provide thousands of jobs for Michigan residents and generate over \$400 million annually in spirits revenue to the state of Michigan, making the spirits industry one of the state's largest revenue sources. MSA members represent more than 80 percent of the more than 8.5 million cases of spirits sold in the state each year.

The MSA publishes "Pure Spirits" magazine twice a year and the latest edition can be viewed online at:

https://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/leisure/MSA_Pure_Spirits_2018_Q4/index.php#/0

The MSA also hosted its first public tasting event in 2018 at the Detroit Historical Museum and information on future tastings will be available at www.purespiritstasting.com

More information about the Michigan Spirits Association can be found online at: <http://www.mispiritsassoc.com/>

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