



**Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce**

**Spirit of Saginaw Award**

**- presented at the Community Leadership Awards Luncheon -**

1. The award will not necessarily be an annual award nor be necessarily limited to one person. In some cases, several persons could win if all are deemed to best exemplify the Spirit of Saginaw by the selection committee. Accordingly, no one should win if the committee does not feel an exemplary volunteer has been nominated.
2. The award will go to an individual, not a firm or organization.
3. The award is for service volunteered to improve the quality of life and/or economic climate of Saginaw County during the **previous 18 months only**.
4. Quality of Life can include such activities as those involving:
  - education/schools
  - recreation/leisure
  - government
  - image of the area
  - community service
  - culture/history
  - entertainment
  - aesthetics of the area
  - crime prevention
  - general volunteerism

Economic Development can include such activities as those involving:

- job creation
  - job retention
  - procuring new business or contacts from outside the Saginaw area
  - business expansion and growth
5. Nominees are not required to be members of the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce or business community.

## SPIRIT OF SAGINAW AWARD RECIPIENTS

1987 Al Loveless, Mark McCabe  
1988 Danny Dambro  
1989 John Krafft  
1990 Wibur Hoffman  
1991 Jeffrey Clevenger, Dave Wierman  
1992 Robert Vitito  
1993 John Nagy  
1994 Eugene Hamilton  
1995 Culli Damuth, Joyce Parker, Lawrence Sims  
1996 Norman Braddock, Herbert Spence, Jr.  
1997 Lloyd Fairbanks  
1998 James Van Tiflin, Gerald Willis  
1999 Frederic L. Fraizer, Dr. Eric R. Gilbertson,  
David M. Hall, Sister Dinah White, D.C.  
2000 Elmer Ganschow, Martha Ann Joseph  
2001 Paul Chaffee, Robert Fish  
2002 Dick Garber, George Olson, Ric Rehmann  
2003 Dr. Craig Douglas  
2004 Dr. Samuel H. Shaheen, Ken Ehline  
2005 Rick Sutton  
2006 Larry Preston, Robert & Arlene Maul  
2007 Jimmy Greene  
2008 Dr. Sam J. Shaheen  
2009 Art Lewis  
2010 Marcia & Allen Rabideau, Ellen Crane  
2011 Vicky Schmitzer & Randy Bierlein  
2012 Ron Schauman  
2013 Dr. Robert Sonntag, William Smith and R.C. Crannell  
2014 Craig Goslin  
2015 Michael J. Hanley  
2016 Laura Yockey  
2017 LaMarr Woodley  
2018 Dean Emerson  
2019 Tom Braley  
2020 Cancelled: COVID-19 Pandemic  
2021 Evelyn McGovern



**SPIRIT OF SAGINAW AWARD**  
Nomination Form

*Nominee*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

989-239-2709 Pharrington

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/pharrington-douglass>

*Nominator*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

***About the Nominee:***

On a separate sheet, please answer the following questions. Attach support documentation or additional information as needed:

1. Describe the event(s) or activity the nominee was involved in during the past 18 months that led to this nomination. Please be specific as to actual contribution/work involved.
2. Please list leadership positions, awards or recognition received by the nominee during the past 18 months that you deem relevant to the nomination.

***Supporting Documents:***

Please contact 1-2 individuals to supply supporting documentation to accompany your nomination form. Support documents can take the form of letters, emails, news articles, etc.

***Submission:*** Return completed nominations by April 30th to:

Lisa Dobbins, Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce  
515 N. Washington Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Saginaw, MI 48607  
or by email to [lisa@saginawchamber.org](mailto:lisa@saginawchamber.org)

Nominations received after the deadline will be considered for the following year.

Ken LeCureux and Pharrington Douglas have poured their hearts into the city of Saginaw. Together, they developed the Urban Tennis Foundation in 2006. The UTF operates and maintains the city's only municipal tennis courts and just recently, raised \$1.9M of a \$2.2M budget to replace the deteriorated Garber Courts with 8 tennis and 8 pickleball courts, a gathering building for off-court teaching, picnic area.

Since its inception, the UTF has served thousands of kids by hosting clinics and tournaments. The tennis facilities and related activities provide opportunities for kids to learn to play tennis. The UTF also conveys an important message to our kids – that they are worth the investment and so is our community.

Living in a post-industrialized city has its challenges. A big part of that challenge is re-imagining what's possible for our future. Ken and Pharrington have applied their passion for tennis to their love for Saginaw to not only imagine a brighter future, but to do something about it.

It is my pleasure to nominate them for the Spirit of Saginaw Award.

Sincerely,

Andy Bethune

# BIERLEIN

February 14, 2022

Ms. Lisa Dobbins  
Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce  
515 N. Washington Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Saginaw, MI 48607

RE: Spirit of Saginaw Award Nomination  
Ken LeCureux

Dear Ms. Dobbins,

On behalf of Bierlein Companies, we are nominating Ken LeCureux for the Spirit of Saginaw Award. The Spirit of Saginaw Award celebrates someone for making the Great Lakes Bay Region a better place and Ken LeCureux has spent his life doing just that. Ken is a member of the Saginaw 100 Club, a member of the E. Malcolm Fields Foundation, and he is on the Board of Trustees for Saginaw Valley State University. Ken has previously been a board member of the Red Cross and has been an elder at Hopevale church for more than 20 years.

We have witnessed Ken's extraordinary volunteer efforts over the last 38 years as the Executive Vice President at Bierlein Companies. Ken helped form the Bierlein Companies Foundation has given millions of dollars to local charities.

Ken married his high school sweetheart whom he'd met at the tennis courts. Ken and Jan have been happily married for 49 years and have one son named Jonathan who played tennis for Heritage High School. Ken is the proud grandfather of two boys and one girl who are all active members in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

Ken's love for tennis runs as deep as his love for the community. He demonstrated his love for Saginaw by playing a major role in helping create The Urban Youth Tennis Foundation in 2006. The Foundation is a nonprofit organization that provides free equipment and instruction to inner city youth who will develop mental, physical, and spiritual life skills through tennis.

Through Ken's leadership, the foundation raised over two million dollars to replace the deteriorated Garber Tennis Courts, a project Ken managed from beginning to end. It is Ken's hope that the new state-of-the-art tennis facility will give many kids the opportunity to create life-long friendships through tennis, just as he has. Ken has been playing tennis with the same group of friends for more than 30 years.

Ken's passion for helping make the Great Lakes Bay Region a better place to work, live and play is undeniable, which is why we consider it our honor to nominate Ken LeCureux for the Spirit of Saginaw Award.

Sincerely,  
Bierlein Companies, Inc.



Michael D. Bierlein  
President/CEO



Emma Bierlein  
Information Coordinator

Demolition • Dismantling • Asset Recovery • Recycling • Crane & Rigging • Environmental Services

2000 Bay City Road • Midland, MI 48642 • Phone: 989-496-0066 • Fax: 989-496-0144 • www.bierlein.com





Department of Athletics

Lisa Dobbins  
Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce  
515 N. Washington Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Saginaw, MI 48607

RE: SUPPORT LETTER FOR SPIRIT OF SAGINAW AWARD

Dear Lisa:

I am pleased to submit this letter of support of the nominations of Pharrington Douglas and Kenneth LeCureux for the Spirit of Saginaw Award. To describe the collective volunteer efforts of these two individuals to improve the quality of life of our region as "extraordinary" in having created and sustained the Urban Youth Tennis program is almost an understatement.

I have had the opportunity for several years, both as a volunteer and observer, to witness the countless hours, tireless dedication, and genuine love that Pharrington and Ken have put into a truly remarkable community program. The teaching clinics that take place, both at the Garber Courts during summertime and in tiny church gymnasiums and other venues at other times of the year, have touched the lives of too many at risk youth to mention. And Pharrington and Ken have been there every step of the way.

Their vision for the impact that a youth tennis program could have on our community has now been achieved with the resurgence of the Garber Tennis complex in the City of Saginaw. These two men persevered and believed in their vision while many around them, myself included, wondered whether or not their unselfish, but lofty, ambitions would ever come to fruition.

It is an amazing story, and one that everyone in our community should be proud to celebrate and cherish. I would be happy to answer any questions that the selection committee has, and I heartily support the nomination of Pharrington Douglas and Ken LeCureux to receive the Spirit of Saginaw Award.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Decker', written over a large, stylized blue scribble.

John Decker  
Director of Athletics and Associate  
Vice President for Legal Affairs  
Saginaw Valley State University

**Spirit of Saginaw**

Ken LeCureux and Pharrington Douglass for the revitalization of Garber Courts. Together, they are a force for raising funds and dedicating countless hours to create a gathering space for city residents that provides exercise, fellowship, life lessons and a brighter future.

Beth Thieme

President & CEO

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