



DR. SAMUEL H. SHAHEEN VISION OF FREE ENTERPRISE AWARD
Nomination Form

Nominee

Name: Mark Flegenheimer

Company: Michigan Sugar Company

Address: 122 Uptown Dr., Ste. 300

City: Bay City State: MI ZIP: 48708

Phone: (989) 686-0161 Email: mark.flegenheimer@michigansugar.com

Nominator

Name: Samantha McKenzie

Company: Hidden Harvest

Address: 940 E. Genesee Ave.

City: Saginaw State: MI ZIP: 48607

Phone: (989) 753-4749 Email: smckenzie@hiddenharvestshares.org

About the Nominee:

On a separate sheet, describe the nominee, listing how he/she meets the award criteria.

Supporting Documents:

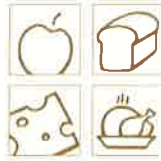
Please contact 1-2 individuals to supply supporting documentation to accompany your nomination form. Support documents can take the form of letters, emails, news articles, etc.

Submission:

Return completed nominations by April 30th
Lisa Dobbins, Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce
515 N. Washington Ave., 3rd Floor, Saginaw, MI 48607
or by email to lisa@saginawchamber.org

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

HIDDEN HARVEST



Happily putting good food to good use

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Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce

Attn: Lisa Dobbins

Re: Dr. Samuel H. Shaheen Vision of Free Enterprise Award

Dear Lisa and Selection Committee,

As a non-profit professional serving the Great Lakes Bay Region, I am very blessed to know some of the most engaged, supportive and driven business leaders throughout our community. I am honored to know Mark Flegenheimer and to recommend him for the Dr. Samuel H. Shaheen Vision of Free Enterprise Award.

Hidden Harvest is honored to be the beneficiary of food donations that get spread through Saginaw County and beyond. With Mark at the helm of Michigan Sugar, we have a wonderful generous connection to Michigan Sugar products and employees willing to serve on boards, volunteer and advocate for our program. Because of his generosity and commitment to the community, five pound bags of Michigan Sugar can be found in the food pantries waiting to go home with families who appreciate having that nice kitchen staple in their cupboards. Michigan Sugar is a valued ingredient in the kitchens of our local homeless shelters who welcome people in from the elements with a cup of coffee made a little sweeter by their generosity. Bulk bags of Michigan Sugar can be found at our local soup kitchens, who bake cookies and cakes from scratch to make their meals served a little more special.



As a resident of Saginaw County, Mark believes in moving our community forward, but also our entire region and beyond. Continuing the family legacy of leadership at Michigan Sugar, Mark has plans to grow the business to have a multi-generational impact on the economy of our community. Mark does an amazing job representing agri-business, which is such a vital piece of our economy, culture and history for our community. And as the leader of a food-focused organization, I know that Hidden Harvest is blessed to be located in such a fertile and agriculturally rich region – and we are certainly blessed to be located in such close proximity to a major food producer which leadership at the helm whose generosity is directed locally.

Beyond seeing the impact within Hidden Harvest... As a mom of young kids with a membership to the Mid-Michigan Children's Museum, I see Michigan Sugar's commitment to the youth in our community in providing educational opportunities about agriculture. I love going to Saginaw Spirit games and hearing the announcements about "Sweet Shot of the Game" donations to the Rescue Ministries of Mid-Michigan. And maybe one day I will get up the courage to enter the Michigan Fruit Pie Competition in the Saginaw County Fair. These are all great community give-backs and highlight how interwoven Michigan Sugar is into the fabric of Saginaw County.

Please consider this heartfelt nomination for Mark Flegenheimer who has a heart for our community and a heart for business. More detailed information about business achievements are included below.

Happily putting good food to good use,

Samantha McKenzie, President & CEO
940 E. Genesee Avenue • P.O. Box 1982 • Saginaw, MI 48605-1982 • Phone: (989) 753-4749 • Toll Free: (877) 529-8488
Hidden Harvest
Fax: (989) 753-5707 • www.hiddenharvestshares.org

<https://www.michigansugar.com/>

OUR STORY – Founded in 1906, Michigan Sugar Company is headquartered in Bay City, Michigan, and has sugarbeet processing facilities in Bay City, Caro, Croswell and Sebewaing, Michigan. Additionally, Michigan Sugar has warehouse facilities in Carrollton, Michigan, as well as Fremont and Findlay, Ohio; a terminal in Toledo, Ohio; and a dozen sugarbeet piling stations in Michigan and Ontario.

Michigan Sugar's nearly 900 grower-owners plant and harvest about 160,000 acres of sugarbeets each year in 20 Michigan counties, as well as Ontario, Canada. Those beets are sliced at the company's factories and turned into about 1.2 billion pounds of sugar annually.

The sugar is sold to industrial, commercial and retail customers under the Pioneer and Big Chief brands.

Michigan Sugar Company has 980 year-round employees and an additional 1,100 seasonal workers. The company's annual local economic impact is about \$600 million.

Michigan Sugar Company is the third largest of nine sugarbeet processing companies in the United States and Michigan is one of 11 states where sugarbeets are grown in the country.

Michigan Sugar investing \$65M to build desugarization facility in Bay City to extract more sugar from molasses

BAY CITY, MI - A large crowd was gathered under a tent in one of Michigan Sugar's beet piling fields in Bay County's Monitor Township, awaiting what the company stated was a historic announcement.

"Things are about to get even sweeter," said Rob Clark, Michigan Sugar director of communications to the crowd.

Michigan Sugar Company announced to the gathered crowd, which included local and state officials, on Tuesday, Aug. 24 that it is planning to invest more than \$65 million to construct a desugarization facility at its factory located at 2600 S. Euclid Ave. in Bay County's Monitor Township. The factory is commonly known as the company's "Bay City factory".

"This enormous undertaking, investment, and commitment by our grower-owners will have a multi-generational impact for our cooperative," said Mark S. Flegenheimer, President and CEO of Michigan Sugar. "This is a historic day for our owners, our employees, our customers and our community."

The project is expected to begin in fall 2021 and is scheduled to take 18 to 24 months to complete, according to Flegenheimer. Once operational, the company is expecting to process as much as 650 tons of molasses daily, up from the current amount of 325 tons per day. According to information provided by Michigan Sugar, the company currently has the capacity to extract additional sugar from 60% of its molasses. The new facility will allow the company to extract additional sugar from 100% of its molasses.

"Simply put, we can sell sugar at a higher price than we sell molasses," he said. "Our nearly 900 grower-owners will see added annual revenue of \$10 million to \$15 million, in perpetuity."

"The \$65 million shows our commitment not only to this industry and this community and our employees but our customers as well. We're excited about the growth and opportunity that today's announcement creates," added Flegenheimer.

Michigan Sugar Company is made up of grower-owners that are spread out across about 20 Michigan counties, as well as Ontario, Canada. The 13-member Co-op Board of Directors approved the desugarization project earlier this year. For the grower-owners like Adam Herford of Elkton, this project is an investment in sustainability.

"It allows us to produce up to 80 million more pounds of sugar annually without having to plant another acre of sugar beets. That makes this story a story about sustainability," said Herford, who also serves as a board chairman. "It means 80 million more pounds of sugar without any additional passes over our farm field with our equipment, without any further spraying of our crops to ward off disease and pests and without burning any additional fuel on our farms to expand operations. It's truly a win-win for all involved."

Michigan's Sugar \$65 million plus investment into Bay City facility was done in partnership and coordination with Bay Future, Monitor Township officials and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, according

to Bay Future president and CEO Trevor Keyes. Keyes emphasized the impact that this project will have on Bay County and its economy.

“As one of Bay County’s top employers, the impact of this project will have a ripple effect throughout Bay County, providing both direct and indirect benefits across businesses and to community members who call Bay County home,” he said.

Monitor Township Supervisor Terry Spencer echoed Keyes sentiment, stating that the township depends greatly on Michigan Sugar as pillar of its economy since it is one of the township’s largest taxpayers and employers.

“This company literally invests millions of dollars each year to improve its facilities and operations,” he said. “Michigan Sugar’s factories are among the oldest in the world, but inside they are filled with state-of-the-art equipment and technology. We are so fortunate the company’s grower-owners have continued to invest in these factories and these communities year after year after year.”

As part of the \$65 million-plus investment, Michigan Sugar Company plans to add \$4 million in juice softening equipment at its factory in Caro and its factory in Sebawaing. Vice president of operations Jason Lowry explained that when factories desugar molasses, they need the molasses to be soft.

“We have juice softening equipment already in Bay City and we installed juice softening equipment at our factory in Croswell as part of a \$70 million capital upgrade of that facility over the past six years,” Lowry said. “Now, we’ll add that equipment in Caro and Sebawaing, which means those factories, and those communities also will benefit from our investment.”

Published: 8/24/21

Michigan Sugar Company donates sugar to 65 area food pantries 20,800 pounds distributed Monday, Nov. 9, 2020, in partnership with United Way of Bay County, Hidden Harvest

BAY CITY, MICHIGAN – It is always wonderful when you can “Live United” while “Making Life Sweeter” at the same time. Throw in some near-perfect early November weather and you’ve got yourself a pretty great day!

Michigan Sugar Company, in partnership with United Way of Bay County, held its annual United Way Sugar Distribution Day on Monday, Nov. 9, 2020, at the company’s factory in Bay City. This year, Michigan Sugar Company donated 20,800 pounds of white granulated Pioneer Sugar to 65 food pantries from Arenac, Bay, Midland, Saginaw, and Tuscola counties.

Each pantry left with 320 pounds of sugar.

“As our cooperative’s grower-owners prepare to wrap up another harvest of sugarbeets, we are very pleased to once again be distributing sugar to our local food pantries with the knowledge that our product will continue on into the hands of those who need it most,” said Rob Clark, Director of Communications and Community Relations for Michigan Sugar Company. “Our employees and our grower-owners are committed to giving back to our communities and this distribution is just one way to do that.”

Clark said Michigan Sugar Company annually donates more than 100,000 pounds of sugar to charitable causes throughout Michigan. Monday’s distribution comes after the company, earlier this year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, donated more than 46,000 pounds of sugar to Hidden Harvest, a food rescue and redistribution agency serving the Great Lakes Bay Region.

“We understand the need in our communities is great, especially now during the pandemic,” said Clark. “We are grateful that we are able to help by donating a product we know is needed and wanted, but not always at the top of the shopping list during difficult times.”

Hidden Harvest was also involved in this year’s United Way Sugar Distribution Day, as the agency picked up sugar for 30 of the recipient food pantries.

“The United Way of Bay County is proud and grateful to partner with Michigan Sugar in the distribution of sugar to 65 food pantries,” said Marybeth Laisure, Executive Director and CEO for the United Way of Bay County. “With the holidays fast approaching, many families have baking traditions that have been passed down for generations. With the donation of this sweet product, Michigan Sugar assures that low-income families have the opportunity to bake or cook up some of their own family favorites.”

Samantha McKenzie, President and CEO of Hidden Harvest, echoed that statement.

“Michigan Sugar’s annual distribution means so much to the Hidden Harvest food pantries in the Great Lakes Bay Region: these donations mean a teaspoon of local sweetness in someone’s coffee as they register for food assistance and a kitchen staple that local families visiting a food pantry will truly appreciate,” she said. “Thank you Michigan Sugar for making this possible, we appreciate the partnership in putting good food to good use.”

To see photos from this year’s Sugar Distribution, check out Michigan Sugar Company’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/michigansugar/>.

May 20, 2022

Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce
515 N. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48607

RE: Dr. Samuel H. Shaheen Vision of Free Enterprise Award

Dear Lisa and Members of the Selection Committee:

While presenting during Michigan Sugar Company's 2020 Annual Meeting President and CEO Mark Flegenheimer walked across the stage and clicked his slide deck forward to the next slide.

"Innovate or Die" read the message on the screen, a quote Walt Disney Company CEO Bob Iger wrote about in his book "Ride of a Lifetime." It was a message Mark wanted to drive home to his employees and shareholders that day and it became immediately clear these were more than words to the leader of the third largest sugar beet producing company in the United States.

This was a credo.

I remember sitting in the audience that day and being overcome with emotion as pride welled up inside me. I immediately reached for my cell phone because I wanted to capture this moment that was re-affirming why I had come to work for Michigan Sugar two years earlier. Yes, we are a company that honors its history and heritage, but we also are a company continually moving forward, not afraid of change, a challenge, or adversity.



We are a company that builds on successes and considers innovation a badge of honor.

I've seen this "Innovate or Die" attitude many times during my more than four years working as Director of Communications and Community Relations for Michigan Sugar, a cooperative owned by nearly 900 sugar beet farmers and run by a talented group of employees.

I saw it when Walmart, one of our company's largest retail partners came to us and asked us to invent a half-display pallet that could be moved right from the warehouse to the sales floor without employees having to handle a single bag. We won a national innovation award for that project, and it got the entire industry talking about how we had transformed the baking aisle of the world's largest retailer.

I saw it in the small town of Croswell, Michigan, where over a seven-year period Michigan Sugar Company invested more than \$70 million to upgrade its factory with the goal of increasing production by 50 percent, from 4,000 tons per day to 6,000 tons. An investment of this nature in a town like Croswell is unparalleled in Michigan and we are excited for what the future holds there.

I saw it in August 2021, when Michigan Sugar Company announced a \$65+ million project to build a new molasses desugarization facility at its Bay City factory that, when operational in 2023, will allow the company to produce up to an additional 80 million pound of sugar without planting another acre of sugar beets while returning an additional \$10-\$15 million annually to our grower-owners, in perpetuity.

All the while these types of projects were being planned and executed, Mark also oversaw the development of Michigan Sugar Company's first Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility statement (read it at www.michigansugar.com under the "About" tab), the adoption of a new Mission (*Creating Growth and Opportunity*) and Purpose (*Making Life Sweeter*), and the establishment of our EPIC+ Values (*Excellence, Pride, Integrity, Compassion, and Trust*) which are the things we think, do, and say every day when making decisions.

It's true that at Michigan Sugar we live by the credo "Innovate or Die." That attitude starts at the very top of the organization. But we also live by our mission, purpose, and values. Mark wouldn't have it any other way.

Before closing, I want to share three more quick tidbits that illustrate the type of man and leader Mark Flegenheimer is.

First, is that Mark's door is always open and if you call him, he'll answer the phone. He's not closed off and in fact welcomes constructive feedback and ideas. I have a habit of appearing in Mark's office doorway and asking, "Can I bug you for a minute?" His answer is always the same: "You're not bugging me."

Always.

Second, in time at Michigan Sugar there have been occasions when an employee or an executive has had to deliver bad news to Mark. Oftentimes, the messenger appears uncomfortable, especially when delivering this message in a group setting. Mark's response is always the same: "Just tell me and we'll deal with it."

Always.

Last, I will share a story I believe defines who Mark is as a person.

Early on during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mark saw the impact on the employees at Michigan Sugar and the community in general. He saw the weight of stress our essential employees carried on their shoulders and watched as many other businesses struggled for survival.

He called me into his office one day and we talked about some type of program that would both thank our employees and help our business communities in the towns where we operate.

"How about we buy restaurant gift cards and give them to the employees," Mark proposed. I thought it was a great idea.

“What are you thinking?” I asked, prodding for a few more details.

“How about \$100 in gift cards per employee?” he shot back without hesitation. “I’ll take it to the board.”

And just like that, Michigan Sugar Company began a journey that resulted in us purchasing more than \$130,000 in gift cards from restaurants in places like Bay City, Caro, Croswell, Sebawaing ... and beyond. To this day, I’ve never been prouder of a company for which I worked.

And it was all because of Mark Flegenheimer.

It is with great admiration I submit this letter of recommendation for Mark Flegenheimer to be named the 2022 Dr. Samuel H. Shaheen Vision of Free Enterprise Award recipient. I sincerely thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to share my story about Mark with you.

Sincerely,



Rob Clark
Director of Communications and Community Relations
Michigan Sugar Company

