

# James C. Epolito Selected as the Inaugural Distinguished Leadership Award Recipient

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PRNewswire  
LANSING, Mich.

Leadership Michigan, a program of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce, is pleased to announce its 2005 Distinguished Leadership Award recipient, James C. Epolito. He will be honored at the Annual Leadership Dinner on October 20, 2005 at the Henry Ford Eagle Tavern in Greenfield Village.

The Michigan Chamber Foundation's Leadership Michigan program established the Distinguished Leadership Award this year to honor individuals who have demonstrated excellence in leadership and exemplify the goals and aspirations of Leadership Michigan. Leadership Michigan has graduated over 400 professionals since its start in 1988.

Mr. Epolito was selected because of his exceptional leadership qualities; his achievement in both professional and civic activities; his ability to create and articulate a vision and affect change; and his significant contribution to the development of future leaders. He is a graduate of the first Leadership Michigan class of 1988.

"Leaders like Jim Epolito are in demand," said Bill Wesley of HRH of Lansing, Inc., who nominated Mr. Epolito for this award. "They provide the vision and spark to move organizations to another level of effectiveness." He has done this for companies he has worked for, namely Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Accident Fund Insurance Company of America. He has also done this for organizations he has volunteered his time for, such as Michigan State University's Safe Place abused women shelter, Capital Choice economic development campaign, Ele's Place for grieving children, Capital Area United Way and United Negro College Fund.

"Jim has the unique leadership capacity to bring his energy and plans to community projects, while bringing many other individuals and their gifts to the 'community table,'" said Kevin A. Kelly of the Michigan State Medical Society. "He brings people together in such a way that they can give their very best and help lift the community together." Nancy McKeague of the Michigan Health & Hospital Association, echoes these sentiments about his tremendous ability as an outstanding leader. "I believe the business community will be equally well-served with Jim as the CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation," a role he assumes September 1st.

"We are very excited to recognize Mr. Epolito's outstanding achievement in leadership and to provide an example of what excellence in leadership means," said Aimee Bahs, Director of the Leadership Michigan program. "Mr. Epolito has certainly set the bar for future years, but based on the phenomenal nominations we received this year, I'm sure we will not be lacking in worthy candidates for years to come."

The crystal award will be presented to Mr. Epolito at the Annual Leadership Dinner on Thursday, October 20, 2005 at The Henry Ford Eagle Tavern in Greenfield Village from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Anthony Earley, Jr., CEO of DTE Energy is the keynote speaker. Please visit <http://www.michamber.com/ne/lm/dinner.asp> for details on the Annual Leadership Dinner and to register.

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber Foundation

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Web site: <http://www.michamber.com/>  
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