

Michigan Chamber Board Elects Officers, Approves Executive Staff Transition Plan

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce elected new officers to its Executive Committee at a meeting held September 14th at the Grand Traverse Resort in Traverse City. The Michigan Chamber's Executive Committee and Board of Directors set policy and establish priorities for the statewide business organization.

John D. Pirich, Partner, Honigman, Miller, Schwartz & Cohn, Lansing, will serve as Chair of the Michigan Chamber's Board of Directors for 2005-2006. He replaces Morrall M. Claramunt, Executive Vice President & Secretary of Frankenmuth Mutual Insurance Company, Frankenmuth, who became the Immediate Past Chair. David G. Sowerby, Vice President, Loomis, Sayles & Company, LP, Bloomfield Hills, was re-elected Treasurer.

Re-elected as vice chairs were: Betsy DeVos, Chairman, Windquest Group, Inc., Grand Rapids (District II); Lynn R. Wolgast, CEO, Wolgast Corporation, Saginaw (District III); and Thomas Dekar, Vice Chairman & Regional Managing Principal-North Central, Deloitte & Touche USA LLP, Detroit (District VII). Wolgast was selected as First Vice Chair and will become Chair in 2006.

New vice chairs elected at the meeting include: R. D. "Dan" Musser, III, President, Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island (District I); Robert T. McDonough, Director, Corporate Affairs & Community Relations, Pfizer, Kalamazoo (District IV); Melanie Bergeron, President & COO, Two Men And A Truck International, Inc., Lansing (District V); and Richard F. Russell, President & CEO, Amerisure Mutual Insurance Company, Farmington Hills (District VI).

At the September 14th meeting, the Michigan Chamber Executive Committee approved an executive staff leadership transition plan. This follows the announcement by Michigan Chamber President & CEO James Barrett that he plans to retire in July 2008. Barrett joined the Chamber in 1971, was selected President & CEO in 1976, and is the longest serving state chamber president in the country.

The Executive Committee approved the promotion of Richard K. Studley to Executive Vice President of the Michigan Chamber. Studley joined the Chamber staff in May, 1981. He currently serves the business community as the Michigan Chamber's chief lobbyist. Studley will continue to play a leadership role in the Chamber's business advocacy program, while becoming increasingly involved in the management and administration of the organization. The transition plan outlines a process for Studley to become the next President & CEO of the Michigan Chamber upon Barrett's retirement.

Senior Vice President Robert LaBrant (Political Action and General Counsel) and Jock Aikman (Development) will continue in their leadership roles working closely with Barrett, Studley, Chamber officers and staff during the three-year executive leadership transition period.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce is a statewide business organization which represents approximately 6,800 employers, trade associations and local chambers of commerce. The Michigan Chamber was established in 1959 to be an advocate for Michigan's job providers in the legislative, political and legal process.

SOURCE: Michigan Chamber of Commerce

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