



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 1, 2018

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Fresh Encounter Wins Grocer Award

(New Palestine, IN)—Earlier this week, the Ohio Grocers Association presented its prestigious Large Operator Pinnacle Award to Michael Needler Jr. & Fresh Encounter, Inc. The Pinnacle Award, based on operational excellence and significant contribution to Ohio's food industry, is given annually to both a small operator and a large operation.

Michael Needler, Jr. is the President and CEO of Fresh Encounter, Inc., a 61 store independent retailer located in Findlay, Ohio. Fresh Encounter stores operate under the Chief, Community Markets, Great Scot, Remke and Needler's Fresh Markets banners. Michael joined Fresh Encounter in August of 2009 after spending five years in banking and capital markets in Los Angeles, Ca. He attended the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business for his M.B.A. He completed the Executive Management Development program at Cornell University and received his B.A. from Hanover College in Indiana, majoring in Economics and Finance.

Needler serves on the FMI Board of Directors, NGA Government Relations Committee, Ohio Grocers Board, and NGA Foundation Board of Regents. Needler is actively involved in his community where he was past Chairman of Board of the directors for the Findlay Family YMCA, Board of Counselors for the University of Findlay and coaches' youth soccer. He is an avid runner and golfer but is most appreciative of time spent with his wife Bethany and their 4 children, Madeline (10), Hazel (8), Toulou (4) and Michael III (1).

"I am extremely honored to recognize Fresh Encounter as our 2018 Large Operator Pinnacle Award winner," says Kristin Mullins, President/CEO of OGA. "Mike Needler Jr. and the entire team have a long record of serving their communities and running outstanding grocery operations. They are most deserving of the Ohio Grocers Association's highest honor."

In addition to today's store presentation, Fresh Encounter will receive a special video recognition at the Ohio Grocers Annual Trade Relations Gala on April 14, 2018, at the Nationwide Hotel and Conference Center.

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