



2017 MIFMA

Board of Directors Candidates

Farmers Market Representatives



Chris Broadbent – incumbent

Detroit Community Markets

Chris is seeking re-election on the MIFMA Board of Directors because he understands the impact and scope of MIFMA and feels aligned with the goals and values of the organization. He is learning about policy and organizational governance and wants to learn more about the systemic changes MIFMA is organizing and working with. Chris wants to be part of a team that leads our excellent State's effort to increase food access and recognizes that an association like MIFMA has the greatest chance to impact this increase through its membership, professionalism, and vision.

Chris would bring to the MIFMA Board six years of experience as a farmers market manager. Currently, Chris serves as the Detroit Community Markets Coordinator with previous stops at the People's Food Co-op and YMCA in Kalamazoo. He also has multiple years of experience as a Board of Directors member for local non-profit organizations, as well as multiple years participating as a MIFMA Mentor. Chris brings a positive attitude, collaborative approach to problem solving, asks great questions and works collaboratively to create solutions, and fosters a stewardship approach to supporting MIFMA members, markets, vendors and stakeholders in their goal achievement.



Melissa Harrington – incumbent

Fulton Street Farmers Market, Grand Rapids

Melissa Harrington is currently serving as Treasurer on the MIFMA board and is seeking re-election. Before embarking into the world of farmers markets, Melissa received her B.S. in Anthropology from Grand Valley State University with an emphasis on food and culture. She went on to pursue her graduate studies at Western Michigan University studying farmers markets, and more specifically, the social interactions that occur through economic transactions at farmers markets. She is currently "retiring" after nine years as Market Manager and Executive Director at the Fulton Street Farmers Market in Grand Rapids. Melissa also serves on the City of Grand Rapids Urban Agriculture Committee and is a board member and treasurer for the Heartside Gleaning Initiative. She still maintains the love for markets and wishes to share her knowledge with and continue learning about the Michigan market community.

Michigan Farmers Who Sell Their Own Products at Farmers Markets



Rebecca Titus – incumbent

Titus Farms, Leslie, MI

Rebecca and her parents own and operate Titus Farms, a 40-acre vegetable and cut flower farm located in Leslie, Michigan. They grow more than 40 varieties of crops, using sustainable methods. Rebecca has taken on the leadership role on the farm and managing many of the day-to-day operations. Rebecca graduated with an honors Horticulture degree from Michigan State University in 2009. Titus Farms regularly sells at the Meridian Township Farmers Market and the East Lansing Farmers Market. Rebecca has more than 15 years of experience in marketing and participating in more than 10 farmers markets, some simultaneously, seeing many markets rise while others fail. These experiences have predisposed her to a passion for the success and continuation of markets in Michigan. This credo also comes not only from the fact that she values the right of farmers to sell their goods directly to consumers and reap the benefits of this relationship but also that belief in the importance of safe, local food to a community and its members. As a new generation farmer, Rebecca believes that her perspectives and experiences will prove valuable and as a member of the Board of Directors, she will strive to help develop farmers markets in Michigan.

Business Professionals



Michael Finegan – incumbent

Senior Vice President, Operational Excellence at Trinity Health

Michael has had a long interest in supporting local food economies and creating linkages between consumers and local food producers. Success will require broad education and advocacy efforts involving the public, government, and industry, innovation, and the reinvestment in local food economies.

Professionally, he has been a healthcare administrator for more than 25 years, first with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VHA) and now at Trinity Health, based in Livonia, serving as a Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, and his present role of Senior VP of Operational Excellence, focusing on performance improvement, operational transformation, and project management. While at VHA, he held several leadership positions such as co-chair of the Healthcare Delivery and Finance Committees, providing oversight of clinical performance and financial effectiveness, and as the field sponsor of Veterans' Homeless program. He briefed congressional staff and members, and in 2010, testified before the US House Veterans Affairs Committee on budget formulation and deployment at VHA medical facilities.

The missions of the organizations with which Michael has worked have focused on a socio-economic population for whom access to healthcare and safe, healthy, locally sourced food is a challenge. As healthcare moves from a business model that pays for volume to one that pays for value, healthy lifestyle choices have become a critical business imperative. Throughout his career, his entrepreneurial approach created innovative programming to meet patients' needs. If privileged to serve on the Board of MIFMA, his personal interest in local food systems will converge with his professional interest and expertise.



Lindsey Scalera – incumbent

Farm to Institution Campaign Director, Ecology Center

Lindsey Scalera is the Farm to Institution Campaign Director for the Ecology Center Sustainable Food Healthy Communities Program. In this role, she serves as a Regional Organizer for Health Care Without Harm's Healthy Food in Health Care program and as the Co-Lead for the Michigan Farm to Institution Network and our local food procurement campaign, Cultivate Michigan. Collaborating with institutional and supply chain partners throughout Michigan, Lindsey works to bring local and sustainable food to schools, universities, healthcare facilities and communities.

While earning her Master's Degree in Social Foundations of Education, specializing in EcoJustice Education from Eastern Michigan University, she worked with the Southeast Michigan Stewardship (SEMIS) Coalition facilitating ecojustice and place-based education partnerships among schools, teacher educators, and community partners. Lindsey got her start in food systems work as co-founder and coordinator of the Giving Garden at EMU in 2009, followed by helping to launch the Michigan Young Farmer Coalition in 2010.

She comes to the Ecology Center from her former position with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition as Grassroots Organizer for Michigan Voices for Good Food Policy campaign, where she connected Michigan farmers and other food system allies with opportunities to shape federal farm and food policies that affect them most. She served as secretary for the Washtenaw County Food Policy Council during its inaugural year and is currently a member of the WFPC Farmers and Institutional Purchasing Policy Action Team.



Steve Gianni

Land Grant Director, Bay Mills Community College

As small-scale farmers, my family and I have had the pleasure of selling eggs, goat milk soap and vegetables at the Sault Ste. Marie Farmers' Market for close to 10 years; we have witnessed our local market grow from very humble beginnings into a flourishing component of our downtown during market season. Additionally, over the past couple of years, we have become aware of the challenges moving forward of maintaining a sustainable market, as the flow of initial enthusiasm and support gives way to the realities of a growing market.

As a Land Grant Director, I am involved with the development and improvement of our agriculture sector on a daily basis; I feel that I am capable of discussing and promoting most aspects of the agriculture and food enterprise. I have significant experience as a board member and look forward to the opportunity to assist MIFMA as it seeks ways to sustain its viability moving forward.