



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Minnesota Grocers Recognize 2023 Award Winners and Hall of Fame Inductee**

St. Paul, MN – August 3, 2023 - The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) has a long-standing tradition of honoring the best of the best by annually presenting awards to those in the industry that demonstrate excellence, have made significant contributions, and are highly respected by their peers. This year's award winners are a testament to the vitality of the grocery industry in Minnesota. The awards were presented by MGA Board Chair, Chris Quisberg, and MGA President, Jamie Pfuhl on July 30, 2023, at the association's annual conference celebrating in Brainerd, MN. This is the state's premier event showcasing the pride and tremendous accomplishments of those in the Minnesota food industry and was attended by more than 300 members of the industry.

The 2023 Outstanding Grocer Award was presented to Craig and Kristee Thorvig, owners of Chris' Food Center in Sandstone, MN. Craig began his grocery career as a young boy sorting potatoes and counting pop machine money at his parent's store. Kristee's first job was in 9<sup>th</sup> grade as a cashier at the store where she met Craig. They married in 1999 and together they have operated the store since 2003 when they took over the family business from Craig's father, Chris. The store through its many evolutions has been in the family for nearly 30 years.

The store is a community hub. It hosts several events and fundraisers for area children and organizations. Craig and Kristee are humble in their community support including school meal support, free delivery for senior citizens, Adopt a Highway, plastic recycling, and many more. The store is known throughout the area for its creative displays and community involvement. Under Kristee's creative guidance, they have won numerous state and national display competitions. Craig is a member of the MGA Executive Committee and served as the Board Chair from 2010-2012 and is currently Chair of the MGA Foundation Board. Craig and Kristee are true leaders in their community and business. Their leadership and passion epitomize what it means to be outstanding grocers.

Mark Schneider of Littler Mendelson, P.C. was honored by the MGA with its 2023 Outstanding Vendor Award. This award is given to those with outstanding industry accomplishments in Minnesota, commitment and innovation in support of its clients, as well as involvement in the MGA. Schneider's career has extended more than 40 years and his commitment to the food industry of Minnesota has been unparalleled. He has represented many Minnesota food businesses and retailers focusing on the areas of labor law and negotiations. Schneider has mentored many and his deep dedication to his clients is admirable. This demonstrates why he was honored with the 2023 Outstanding Vendor Award.

Steve Quisberg, owner of S & R Quisberg, Inc. in Baxter, MN, was inducted into the Minnesota Grocers Association's Hall of Fame in recognition of his outstanding service and exemplary contributions to Minnesota's food industry. Steve started his grocery career working in his father Sherm's store when he was 12 years old. He eventually took over the Brainerd County Market in 1987 and successfully revitalized the store. In 1991, Quisberg opened an additional Country Market store in Baxter – both of

those locations are now operated as Cub Foods stores. Under his skillful guidance, S & R Quisberg also opened the Pequot Lakes SuperValu and expanded into the convenience store business. Quisberg is greatly respected by his peers and business partners. He has been heavily engaged in the MGA and served on the Board of Directors for a decade and as chairman from 1990-1992. He was awarded the MGA Grocery of the Year award recipient in 1995 and he now joins his father, Sherman Quisberg, in the MGA Hall of Fame – an honor well deserved.

This year's award winners showcased the important role the local grocer plays in their community. It also highlighted the strong generational commitment to consumers, careers, and community.

*The Minnesota Grocers Association (MGA) is the only state trade association that represents the food industry of Minnesota from farm to fork. We are one of the oldest trade associations in the state, celebrating over 125 years of advancing industry. We have over 300 retail, manufacturing, and wholesale members supporting nearly 1,300 locations statewide. Our member companies employ over 150,000 union and non-union Minnesotans. We actively advance the common interest of all those engaged in any aspect of the food industry as a leader and advocate in government affairs.*

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