

# michigan

meetings + events

12<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL

# BEST OF

CONGRATULATIONS  
TO LIFETIME  
ACHIEVEMENT  
HONOREE

**Cheryl  
Ronk**

plus the year's brightest  
industry veterans and  
up-and-comers

(50)

FEATURING

33 CATEGORIES SUCH AS »

BEST COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY VENUE, BAND,  
CONVENTION CENTER, GOLF RESORT,  
RENTAL COMPANY, CATERER AND MORE! (39)



**BEST**  
**12<sup>TH</sup>**  
**ANNUAL**  
**MI**

**BY**  
**ALEXA**  
**STANARD**

**THE VOTES ARE IN; here are the winners as decided by the readers of *Michigan Meetings + Events*.**

hat does it mean to be the best? In Michigan, the bar keeps moving north. As our state continues to rebuild and flourish, new venues come on line, new restaurants open their doors and what it takes to truly stand out continues to expand.

So it's inspiring to see so many long-standing vendors and venues continue to earn our readers' loyalty. Newcomers are welcome and often impress, but we clearly have many industry players that built their operations to last.

*So hats off to our winners—you've earned your recognition.*



PHOTOS: FOX THEATRE; (OPPOSITE) HOTEL INDIGO



## TOP VENUES

With such an embarrassment of riches in the mix for venues, the **Fox Theatre** can be especially proud of its position as our readers' choice for Best Meeting/Event Venue (in Detroit Metro Area, No Hotel). The ornate, 5,000-seat theater, designed by architect C. Howard Crane, was built in 1928. Today it's a designated National Historic Landmark. Planners can choose to bring guests to the Fox's gorgeous Grand Lobby for a reception, or take over the whole theater for a truly unforgettable experience.

And though Detroit may be our state's largest city, it's certainly not the only one attracting large groups. Grand Rapids is home to state-of-the-art venues, gorgeous green spaces and renowned cultural institutions. And in the case of the 158-acre **Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park**, which combines cutting-edge meeting and event space with beautiful art and lush gardens, you can get all three. So

it's easy to see why it wins Best Meeting/Event Venue (outside of Detroit Metro, No Hotel) year after year.

We try to stay neutral on matters of collegiate rivalries. But our readers do not—and we clearly have some Spartans reading these pages, because **Michigan State University** is our winner for Best College/University Venue for the third year in a row. The home of the green-and-white boasts top-notch spaces like the Breslin Center, Wharton Center, Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Huntington Club at Spartan Stadium, the MSU Union and MSU Chapel.

A university is a wonderful place to host multiple meetings and events simultaneously. Sometimes, though, you have to pull everyone together in one space, and that's a job for a convention center. Michigan is in something of a golden age of convention centers, between major renovations and new sites com-

# THE WINNERS

**BEST MEETING/EVENT VENUE  
(IN DETROIT METRO, NO HOTEL)**

**Fox Theatre**

*Detroit*

olympiaentertainment.com | 313.471.3333

*Runners-up*» The Henry Ford,  
Detroit Athletic Club

**BEST MEETING/EVENT VENUE  
(OUTSIDE OF DETROIT METRO,  
NO HOTEL)**

**Frederik Meijer Gardens &  
Sculpture Park**

*Grand Rapids*

meijergardens.org | 616.957.1580

*Runners-up*» DeVos Place Convention  
Center; Bavarian Inn Restaurant

**BEST COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY VENUE  
Michigan State University**

*East Lansing*

kelloggcenter.com | 517.884.8117

*Runners-up*» University of Michigan,  
Central Michigan University

**BEST CONVENTION CENTER  
DeVos Place Convention Center**

*Grand Rapids*

devosplace.org | 616.742.6500

*Runners-up*» Cobo Center,  
Grand Traverse Resort and Spa

**BEST INTIMATE VENUE  
Black Star Farms**

*Traverse City*

blackstarfarms.com | 231.944.1270

*Runners-up*» Zingerman's Cornman Farms,  
Chateau Chantal

**BEST NEW VENUE  
(DECEMBER 2015 - DECEMBER 2016)**

**Hotel Indigo**

*Traverse City*

hotelindigo.com | 231.932.0500

*Runners-up*» Knickerbocker Brewpub &  
Distillery, Zingerman's Greyline

**BEST RENOVATION  
Cobo Center**

*Detroit*

cobocenter.com | 313.877.8777

*Runners-up*» Grand Traverse Resort  
and Spa; Mission Point Resort



## Mission Point Earns Accolades

Mission Point marked its third anniversary under new ownership with a number of regional and national nods.

Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards named Mission Point the best resort on Mackinac Island, as well as No. 7 in the Midwest. (The Grand Hotel, the island's only other hotel, was ranked No. 9 in the Midwest.) More than 300,000 people voted in the 2016 awards.

Shape chose Mission Point as one of three "Best Family Getaways" in 2016, calling out the hotel's kids' club, kite flying and new wellness center.

Finally, Midwest Living listed Mission Point as one of three Mackinac hotels in its annual Best of the Midwest issue.

The Ware family bought Mission Point in 2014 and has made extensive changes and upgrades to the property since. Set on 18 acres of lakefront property where Lake Huron meets Lake Michigan, the 239-room resort includes four restaurants, a waterfront 18-hole putting course, tennis court, observation tower and museum, movie theater, Mackinac Arts Council and the Center for the Arts Gallery. Additionally, the property offers more than 38,000 square feet of flexible function space for meetings and events. [missionpoint.com](http://missionpoint.com)



## GLCVB NAMES CTA OF THE YEAR



Doug Klein, CTA, executive director of the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce, is the Greater Lansing Convention and Visitors Bureau's 2016 Certified Tourism Ambassador of the Year. Klein was honored at the bureau's annual meeting in February at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing.

The Greater Lansing Certified Tourism Ambassador program aims to equip hospitality and tourism employees with in-depth knowledge of the area's assets so they may help create a more positive and memorable visitor experience.

Upon completion of the program curriculum, participants receive a nationally recognized certification designation. While focused on the hospitality community, any interested Greater Lansing resident may enroll. The cost for the course is \$20 per person, with group rates available. [lansing.org/cta](http://lansing.org/cta)

## F & B NEWS »

### New Owner, Menu at Rochester Tap Room

Rochester Tap Room has transitioned to sole ownership by long-time Rochester resident Missy Markevics.

Markevics has launched a new menu to emphasize locally sourced products and items, including Knapps Donuts, used for the restaurant's bread pudding; a monthly rotating cheesecake selection from Dessert Oasis; and cheese boards from downtown Rochester's Cheese Lady.

Rochester Tap Room's large open floor plan and second floor are available for meetings and events. It also offers a full catering menu as well as 60-plus beers on tap. [rochestertap.com](http://rochestertap.com)



PHOTOS: MISSION POINT; ROCHESTER TAP ROOM