

FEBRUARY, 2010

Barker selected as Growth Alliance President

Bob Barker has accepted the position of President and CEO of the Mason County Growth Alliance, a diversified, strategic economic development initiative based in Ludington.

Bob was born and raised in Detroit, attended Lutheran H.S. West and excelled in track and mechanical drafting. He graduated from Western Michigan University with a BS degree in Industrial Technology and Education and received an MBA from Northern Michigan University, studying economics, marketing and public policy. In 2010, he completed and passed all course requirements for his Certified Association Executive (CAE) credentials from the American Society of Association Executives.

Bob began his career as a construction management instructor and varsity basketball coach. Throughout a 25 year career in association management, Bob held leadership positions with the following organizations:

Education Manager for the Society for Manufacturing Engineers;
Membership Manager for the National Truck Equipment Association;
Executive Director/CEO of the Mackinaw Area Tourism Bureau;
State Travel Director of Nevada; and
Vice President and CVB Director - Muskegon Economic Growth Alliance.

For the past eleven years, Barker has served as CEO of the Greater Holland Area Home Builders Association building the association membership, marketing high-quality homes, developing advocacies for residential construction and representing the construction industry on local, state and national issues.

Bob has served on national boards such as the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), National State Travel Directors Council (NSTDC) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). In Nevada, Barker was also responsible for the Nevada Film Division and the Nevada Magazine winning numerous marketing and communications awards from ASTA, SATW, NTA and NSTDC.

In Michigan, Barker served on Circle Michigan, Michigan Tourism United, Mackinaw City Chamber, Sesquicentennial Committee, Straits Tourism Council, The Sunrise Side, Muskegon Sister City Initiative, Historic Restoration Task Force, Image Development Board, Lakeshore Alliance and the Frauenthal Marketing Council.

Bob and his wife, Mary, recently incorporated a startup business called Mother Mary's Canning Company. Using only fresh produce from West Michigan farmers, Mother Mary's products feature delectable pickled asparagus, pickled beets, bread and butter pickles, corn relish, Horseradish beet relish, harvest sauce, apple butter and apple sauce. The company launched its business by utilizing the Starting Block, an incubator kitchen located in Hart, Michigan.