

The Grapevine

A Publication From
The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan
Winter/Spring Issue • 2026
Volume 25 • Number 1
Visit Our Website at: www.iaccm.net



Upcoming EVENTS

FEBRUARY 4, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

TIME

- 6:00 PM Board Meeting
- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION

- San Marino Club • 1685 E. Big Beaver Road, Troy



MARCH 4, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

TIME • 6:00 PM Board Meeting

- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION

- MRCC Banquet Center • 23397 Mound Road, Warren

MARCH 11, 2026 • WEDNESDAY

TOPGOLF EVENT

TIME • 6:00 PM – 8:30 pm

Save the Date!

- Golf/Food/Drinks...Details and pricing TBD

LOCATION • 500 Great Lakes Crossing Drive, Auburn Hills



APRIL 1, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

TIME • 6:00 PM Board Meeting

- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION • Fern Hill Golf Club

17600 Clinton River Road, Clinton Twp.



MAY 6, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

TIME • 6:00 PM Board Meeting

- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION • Andiamo Italia • 7096 E. 14 Mile Road, Warren

JUNE 3, 2026 • WEDNESDAY • MONTHLY MEETING

Scholarship Awards Dinner

TIME • 6:00 PM Board Meeting

- 6:30 PM General Membership Meeting

LOCATION

- Club Venetian • 29310 John R Road, Madison Heights



Notes from the PRESIDENT

Happy New Year members!

As I step into the role of President of the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan, I am deeply honored and humbled by the trust placed in me. It is a great privilege to lead an organization that represents not only business excellence but also the rich cultural heritage that binds us together.

The Chamber is more than a business network—it is a community. Our mission is to connect like-minded professionals and entrepreneurs of Italian descent, fostering relationships that strengthen both our businesses and our cultural identity. We celebrate the traditions that shaped us while embracing the innovation that drives us forward.

Our members represent diverse occupations such as insurance agents, attorneys, roofing and glass contractors, even judges and surgeons. What unites us is a shared commitment to hard work, integrity, and family values—principles deeply rooted in our Italian American heritage.

As we look ahead, my vision centers on three pillars: **connection, growth, and legacy.**

- **Connection:** Together we win. We will create more opportunities for members to meet, collaborate, and support one another through networking events and fun meetups such as the upcoming Top Golf event March 11th, or the Italian Breakfast Club monthly meetings. There are also our annual events, like the John B. Agosta Memorial Golf Outing in June and the Festa Italiana held every July at Freedom Hill.
- I encourage you to sit at a different table each monthly meeting and get to know as many members as possible. These connections will create a base to build future relationships upon.
- **Growth:** We want to help our members thrive by sharing resources, spotlighting member businesses, and encouraging

Continued on page 2

Notes From The President

Continued from page 1

partnerships that strengthen our collective success.

- **Legacy:** Our heritage is a source of pride. Through cultural events, and charitable efforts, we will ensure that future generations understand and appreciate the values that brought our ancestors here.

The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan is uniquely positioned to make a difference—not just in business, but in the lives of our members and the broader community.

As I begin this new chapter, I am inspired by the legacy of those who served before me. Charles Moran, Chuck Shermetaro, and Mark Garagiola have created a strong momentum I will keep moving forward, along with the help of our new Officers and Board of Directors .

I invite each of you to join me on this exciting journey. Share your ideas, participate in our events, volunteer to join a committee, and help us build a vibrant network that reflects the best of our Italian American spirit.

Feel free to contact me with any input or issues you may have at: jdivozzo@gmail.com or 586-306-0126

Joe Divozzo - President

2026 OFFICER/BOARD OF DIRECTOR ELECTION RESULTS

At the January 7th General Membership Meeting at the Italian American Cultural Center, the newly elected Officers and Board of Directors were sworn in. Congratulations to the following:

OFFICERS

- **President – Joseph Divozzo**
- **1st Vice President – Philip J. Maniaci**
- **2nd Vice President – Joseph Burke**
- **Secretary – Ronald A. DiBartolomeo**
- **Financial Secretary – Anthony Licata, III**
- **Treasurer – Michael Locricchio**

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

- **Michael Divozzo**

PAST PRESIDENTS 2026

- **Andrew Agosta**
- **David F. Galli**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

~ Term ending 2028

- **John DiPiazza**
- **Honorable Julie Gatti**
- **Leo Salvatore Terzo**



Chairman's CORNER

Happy New Year to all our IACCM members and their families! Wishing you a blessed, joyful, and healthy 2026. Our first meeting of the year took place on January 7th at the Century Banquet Center, and it was so well attended that finding a seat was a challenge - a very good sign! Chef Leonard Palermino and his team provided excellent service. La Befana even stopped by with candy for everyone, except for Pete Lucido, who jokingly received coal.

Congratulations to Joe Divozzo on becoming President of this esteemed organization. Many thanks to the Board of Directors and Past Presidents for appointing him. Joe has big shoes to fill after Charles Moran's two terms as president; through dedication, his infectious smile, and a welcoming attitude, Charles grew our membership from 180 to 209, and we know he'll keep building on this success. Thank you, Charles.

I am honored to serve as Chairman of the Board alongside Joe. Special thanks to Charles Shermetaro for guiding me. Having worked with Joe for 46 years in our family business, I'm excited to see his leadership in action here.

Congratulations to our returning board members, and a warm welcome to new board members Judge Julie Gatti, John DiPiazza, and Aaron Marentette. We're looking forward to collaborating with you.

Happy New Year, and please remember to mark your calendars for our upcoming events!

- **John B Agosta Memorial Golf outing at Fern Hill Golf Club June 29th.**
- **Festa Italian at Freedom Hill July 17-19th.**
- **Festa Della Lira at the Italian Cultural Center October 7th**

Best regards , Mike Divozzo
Chairman of the Board

ITALIAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEW MEMBERS 2025

David M. Beran – B & B Merchant Services
Joseph Bonanni – Beyond Juicery & Eatery
Michele Coppola – Macomb County
Salvatore DiMercurio – DiMercurio Real Estate
Mario Evangelista – Cassino Building & Development, LLC
Victor Fuciarelli – Sealing Engineered Solutions
Stefano Garrisi – Imperial Dade
Victoria Hope
Austin Miller – Honigman, LLP
Gregory Nehra – Essential Services Company
John Pugno – Asbury Roofing & Solar
Patrick Rugiero – Roman Village/Cucina Italiana
Mike Schodowski – Shelving, Inc.
Roslyn Shermetaro Campo
Elaine Shermetaro Myers – Home Pro's
Mary Smith – Club Venetian
Michael Szymanski – Ford Motor Company



IACCM / Holy Family Memorial Mass and Pancake Breakfast November 2, 2025, Holy Family Church

Pictured L-R:

Charles Shermetaro, OD, Charles Promesso, Paul Calcaterra,
Andy Agosta, Mark Garagiola, Charles Moran

Italian-American Chamber of Commerce Birthdays for:

February		
2/1	Guerrieri, John	3/30 Garagiola, Mark D.
2/3	Gagnon, Greg	3/30 Picano, Domenic
2/4	Forlini, Anthony	3/31 DiGiuseppe, Jerome
2/6	Paglia, Paul	April
2/7	Gatti, Hon. Julie	4/3 Buffa, Ross
2/8	Mercurio, Vincen	4/3 Calunas, William A.
2/11	Magnotte, Gerald	4/3 Esposito, Lisa
2/13	Provenzano, Noah	4/7 Calcaterra, Michael J.
2/16	Wolf, Edward M.	4/12 Poliuto, Valerio
2/17	DeLuca, Antonio	4/17 Canzano, Roger
2/19	Notte, Michael R.	4/18 Minoletti, Gary
2/20	DiLorenzo, Frank	4/18 Torrice, Michael
2/22	Jozefiak, Victoria	4/19 Lanni, Angelo S.
2/24	Lucido, III, Peter J.	4/25 Rocca, Larry
2/25	Buffa, Susan Ann	4/25 Tundo, Samuel
2/27	Gaglio, Philip J.	4/29 Vitale, Vincenzo
2/27	Salerno, Dr. Ramo A.	4/30 Gallo, Tony J.
March		May
3/2	Jakubec, Christy A.	5/4 Russo, Agostino
3/4	Fuciarelli, Pietro G.	5/5 Klida, David
3/5	Shermetaro, Charles G.	5/6 Szymanski, Michael
3/6	Pippi-Soave, Angela M.	5/7 Agosta, Anthony Allan
3/7	Congiolo, Alisha	5/8 DeSano-Salvaggio, Alexandria
3/8	Carnaghi, Donald	5/8 Picciche, Vincent
3/12	Bonanni, Jeffrey A.	5/14 Calcaterra, Paul R.
3/14	Piccinini, Ned R.	5/14 DiCicco, Joseph M.
3/17	Rubino, Anthony M.	5/16 Velardo, Armand
3/17	Bommarito, Benedict	5/17 Giarmarco, Julius H.
3/17	Miller, Austin	5/17 Paglia, Enzo
3/18	Vicari, Joseph	5/17 Rogensues, Gary
3/23	Bugli, Antonio J.	5/19 Varanelli, MD, Jeffrey
3/23	Lucido, Alex	5/22 Garrisi, Stefano
3/23	Santeufemia, Michael N.	5/23 Scalzi, Frank
3/24	Esposito, Gino	5/23 DiMercurio, Salvatore
3/26	Giannetti, Frank	5/30 Lawroski, Eric

COME JOIN US

Italian Breakfast Club: 8:30am

January 22

Avi'Ari Cuisine, 46271 Van Dyke, Shelby Twp.

Future dates: (location TBD)

March 18

May 13

July 15

September 9

November 11

June 11 Infinity Cruise (details to follow)

6pm Boarding, 6:30 departure,
9:30 return to dock

Friends of Foster Kids Annual Christmas Wrapping Event

Thank you to all IACCM members who volunteered this year.

*Also a huge THANK YOU to Honorable Joseph Toia
and his wife Theresa for all their hard work year after year!*



Italian American Cultural Center – October 1, 2025



Vince Sarti and Anthony Bugli



Sandra Tornberg and Angie Morelli



Tony Rubino and Ron DiBartolomeo



Honorable Joseph Toia with
new member Patrick Rugiero



Fun times being had with Anthony Licata,
Angie Morelli, and John Bergmann



Honorable Joseph Toia with
new member Mike Schodowski



Tony Rubino, Matt Asman, and Tina Mattinen



Ross and Susan Buffa with Vito Pianello



Rachel, Anthony and Steve Licata



Charles and Robert Shetmetarto



Deborah and Charles Moran



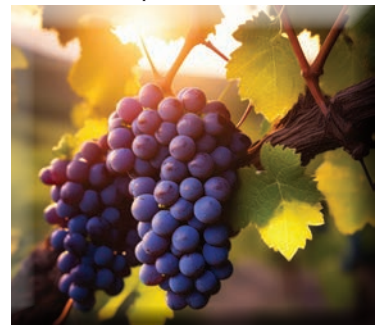
Honorable Joseph Toia swearing in new members
Patrick Rugiero and Mike Schodowski



Paula Badalamente, Rebecca Wilson,
Lori Maceri and Lisa Esposito



Piero Simone, Jeff Varanelli,
Mike Divozzo, and Joe Divozzo



November 5, 2025 • Villa Penna



Charles Moran, Sandra Tornberg, and Patrick Rugiero



Greg Gagnon and Sal Cuccia



Jim Yearego, Tim Monicatti, Gino Esposito, Paul Calcaterra, Larry Rocca, Roger Canzano and Domenic LaRosa



Greg Nehra and Honorable Julie Gatti



Michael Notte and Santino Polidori



RJ Koss, Tina Mattinen and Mike Schodowski

December 2, 2025 • Petruzzello's Banquet Center



Jim Yearego and Gino Esposito



Alisha Congiolo and Mark Garagiola



President Elect Joe Divozzo with current President Charles Moran



Mike Szymanski, Vince Sarti, and Frank Coppola



Daniel and David Galli



David Lazzara and Matt Cervone



Alisha Congiolo, Lori Maceri, Rebecca Wilson, Lisa Esposito, Paula Badalamente, Sam Nehra, Brianna Badalamente, and Greg Nehra



Joe Ventimiglia and Sandra Tornberg



Your Board of Directors hard at work



Joe Lucido and Charles Moran



Paul Calcaterra and Aaron Caruso

Italian American Chamber of Commerce

2026 Installation of Officers & Board of Directors

Century Banquet Center • January 7, 2026



2026 Officers & Board of Directors

Standing L-R Michel Tenaglia, Greg Gagnon, David Galli, Aaron Marentette, Sandra Tornberg, John DiPiazza, Honorable Julie Gatti, Frank Coppola, Paul Calcaterra, Charles Moran, Ross Buffa

Seated L-R Secretary Ronald DiBartolomeo, Financial Secretary Anthony Licata III, Chairman Michael Divozzo, President Joseph Divozzo, 2nd Vice President Joseph Burke, Treasurer Michael Locricchio

Not pictured – 1st Vice President Philip Maniaci, Leo Terzo



2026 Officers

L-R Immediate Past President Charles Moran, Financial Secretary Anthony Licata III, Chairman of the Board Michael Divozzo, President Joseph Divozzo, Secretary Ronald DiBartolomeo, 2nd Vice President Joseph Burke, Treasurer Michael Locricchio

Not pictured – 1st Vice President Philip Maniaci



Past President's Council

Standing L-R Charles Moran, David Galli, Tom Bommarito, Charles Shermetaro OD, Ronald DiBartolomeo

Seated L-R Honorable Joseph Toia, Mark Garagiola, Joseph Ventimiglia, Paul Calcaterra, Sam Ventimiglia

Not pictured – Daniel Galli, David Lazzara, Vito Pianello, Andy Agosta, Ned Piccinini, Pete Marrocco, Gus Russo, Angelo Lanni, Thomas Lanni



Charles Moran gives Charles Shermetaro, OD, an award for his service as Chairman of the Board in 2025



Honorable Joseph Toia with Mario Evangelista, Cassino Building & Development LLC



Best and worse hair – Joe Divozzo and John DiPiazza



The Italian Folklore tradition of La Befana on the eve of the Epiphany, sweets to the good and coal to the naughty



Honorable Joseph Toia swearing in the 2026 Officers and Board of Directors



Honorable Joseph Toia swearing in the newest members for 2026



Honorable Joseph Toia with Michael Szymanski, Ford Motor Company



2026 President Joseph Divozzo with his wife Fran



Roy Schnepfer and Honorable Joseph Toia



Michael Notte, Gary Rogensues, and Darryl Onderik,
President, American Polish Century Club



President Joe Divozzo presenting award to
2025 President Charles Moran
for his two years of service



Honorable Joseph Toia with Stefano Garrisi, Imperial Dade



Macomb County Treasurer Larry Rocca and Prosecutor Peter Lucido



President Joe Divozzo announced that the new
Chairman of the Board would be his brother,
Michael Divozzo



Michel Tenaglia, Charles Shermetaro OD, and Sal Varano MD

Jan 13, 2026

By: Sandra Tornberg



Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan Elects New Board of Directors and Officers and Becomes Affiliate Organization of NIAF

On Wednesday, January 7, 2026, the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan (IACCM) swore in their Board of Directors and officers. The IACCM boasts a rich legacy dating back to its inception in 1919, a collaborative effort between pioneering Italian American entrepreneurs and the Italian Consulate in Detroit.

With a steadfast commitment to fostering economic growth and cultural exchange, the IACCM serves as a dynamic nexus for business professionals and organizations, bridging the vibrant traditions of Italy with the boundless opportunities of the Italian marketplace.

Besides, the Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan (IACCM) has joined the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF) as an affiliate organization. In doing so, the IACCM will be one of an exclusive group of Italian American organizations in the United States to enjoy the perks of this membership. The Federazione Abruzzese of Michigan is already an affiliate organization.

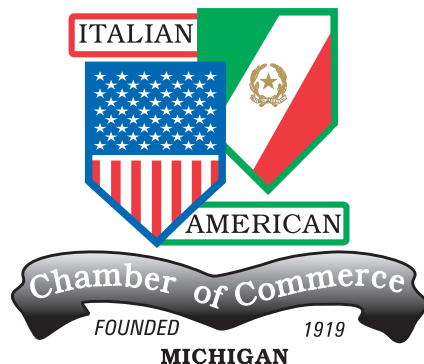


One of the most important perks is the guarantee that one young person from the IACCM will be selected to participate in the NIAF's Ambassador Peter F. Secchia Voyage of Discovery each year. This is a 2 week all expenses paid educational and experiential trip to Italy.

IACCM member Ned Piccinini immediately stepped forward to fund the first two years of membership fees, and Mike Schodowski graciously offered to fund the third year. The IACCM will refer to this trip as the Nazzareno Piccinini Study Abroad Program, in honor of the Ned's late father who was a past IACCM president.

More information about the IACCM and NIAF are available on their website: <https://iaccm.net> <https://www.niaf.org>





December 1, 2025

Dear Members of the Italian Chamber of Commerce of Michigan,

The Board of Directors of The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan (IACCM) has voted to become an Affiliate Organization of the National Italian American Foundation (NIAF). A committee consisting of Ron DiBartolomeo, Aaron Marentette, Leo Terzo, and myself was established to establish the guidelines and roll the program out to the membership. Two of our members have graciously offered to pay the annual membership fee of \$1500 for the first 3 years, with Ned Piccinini funding 2026 and 2027 and Mike Schodowski, shelving.com, funding 2028. After 2028 the membership fee will be paid for by the IACCM.

One of the benefits of membership is that we are guaranteed that one of our young people will be selected to participate in the Ambassador Peter J. Secchia Voyage of Discovery, a 14-day trip to Italy. The trip, valued at \$3,000, includes round-trip airfare, meals, and accommodations. A student meeting **the attached eligibility requirements** and is a **child, grandchild, niece, or nephew of an IACCM member** may apply to be considered.

The instructions for how to apply are also attached. The students must apply online at <https://niaf.communityforce.com/Login.aspx>. Judging will be by the NIAF, with no participation by the IACCM.

Finally, if one of your relatives is going to apply, please send an email or letter with their name and why you feel they are a good candidate. Send email to sandratornberg@comcast.net, or letter to:

Sandra Tornberg

53794 Whitby Way

Shelby Twp., MI 48316

The deadline for applying is February 1, 2026, so please act quickly if you have someone who meets all the requirements. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, by email or at 586-907-6631.

Best regards,

Sandra Tornberg and

“Nazzareno Piccinini Study Abroad Program” Committee

Eligibility

- Must be a full-time college student at a college or university for the semester preceding the trip
- Between the ages of 18-23 at the time of travel
- Applicant must demonstrate a commitment to or interest in Italian culture and heritage
- Preference given to students that have not been to Italy
- A United States citizen or a permanent resident alien
- Must be a member of NIAF (student membership is \$50 per year)

What's Included?

- International round-trip airfare. All meals, unless otherwise noted on itinerary. Comfy accommodations. A busload of new friends. And so much more.

Travel Itinerary

- The Voyage of Discovery, an enriching journey, embarks on an educational expedition to NIAF's Region of Honor, an ever-changing destination. Participants will have the chance to delve into iconic Italian cities and towns, explore ancient landmarks, and savor delectable cuisine. Immerse yourself in the local culture, forging unforgettable memories. Additionally, each trip incorporates a day dedicated to community service. The Voyage of Discovery accommodates two separate sessions, each with 24 students. To catch a glimpse of previous voyages, visit @niafvoyageofdiscovery on Instagram

Important Dates

- Trip Dates: Session 1: Mid to Late May 2026 | Session 2: Early to Mid -June 2026
- Application Opens: November 1, 2025
Application Deadline: February 1, 2026, 11:59 p.m. PT
Applicants Notified: Friday, March 6, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. PT via email
Applicant Acceptance Deadline: Friday, March 13, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. PT via email
- Only online applications will be accepted.



**The National Italian American Foundation
The Ambassador Peter F. Secchia Voyage of Discovery
Application Instructions**

1. Sign up for a NIAF membership

If you qualify for the NIAF Ambassador Peter F. Secchia Voyage of Discovery and are not an active member of the Foundation, [CLICK HERE](#) to visit NIAF's membership registration page and become a member or renew your membership. ***All NIAF memberships are valid for one year from the date of registration.*** Once you fill out the membership form and submit payment, you will receive an e-mail from membership@nialf.org with an electronic membership card. The membership card includes your member number to input on your application. If you do not receive your electronic membership card, please check your spam folder.

2. Get started on Community Force

All new applicants must create a free Community Force account to start your application by pressing the grey, "Create New Account" button on NIAF's [Community Force page](#). If you have applied to a NIAF Scholarship or NIAF on Campus for the 2025-2026 academic year, you may use the same login as you used last year. **Please note that the application login is different from your NIAF membership login. You cannot access NIAF's education program applications from the NIAF membership portal.**

3. Complete the online application

Once you create a Community Force account, log in to your Community Force account and fill out your application details. As you complete the online application, follow the instructions to upload your supporting documentation. **All supporting documentation must be submitted online in a .doc or .pdf format by February 1, 2026 at 11:59 pm PT.**

4. Request two letters of recommendation

Within the Community Force application, request two letters of recommendation from a teacher, supervisor, or community leader. Letters from parents, friends, and relatives will not be considered and your application will be considered incomplete. Once you send a request for a letter of recommendation on Community Force, your recommender will receive an e-mail from admin@communityforce.com instructing him or her how to submit their letter on the Community Force website.

Students will not be able to upload the letter of recommendation themselves. Letters of recommendation must be received by **February 1, 2026 at 11:59 pm PT. No late letters of recommendation will be accepted.** To check whether your provider has uploaded the letter or not, go to your applications and check the percentages underneath the "Request" section.

5. Submit a transcript and resume

NIAF will accept both official and unofficial transcripts to fulfill the transcript requirement. Please upload your most recent transcript(s) and resume as a PDF or Word document in the "Additional Documents" section of the application.

6. Review and submit

Once you have filled out the entire application, please review your application to ensure that all of your responses are complete and correct. As you complete each section, the bar underneath each of the headings will reflect the percentage of the section that you have completed.

After you complete all the required sections of the application and all of the sections show that they are 100% complete, click the "Final Review and Submit" button at the top right-hand corner of your application. Click this button, and it will prompt you to review your application. The application summary will appear. If your application is correct, please click the check box at the top of the page to confirm that you have reviewed the application and click the blue "Submit" button. You will receive an e-mail from admin@communityforce.com to confirm the submission of your application.

The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Joseph Divozzo

1ST VICE PRESIDENT
Philip J. Maniaci

2ND VICE PRESIDENT
Joseph Burke

SECRETARY
Ronald A. DiBartolomeo

FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Anthony Licata, III

TREASURER
Michael Locricchio

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIRMAN
Michael Divozzo

PAST PRESIDENTS 2026
Andrew Agosta
David F. Galli

TERMS ENDING 2026
Greg Gagnon
Frank Coppola
Michel Tenaglia

TERMS ENDING 2027
Ross Buffa
Aaron Marentette
Sandra Tornberg

TERMS ENDING 2028
John DiPiazza
Honorable Julie Gatti
Leo Salvatore Terzo

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Charles Moran

PAST PRESIDENTS COUNCIL

2023 Mark Garagiola
2022 Charles Shermetaro, OD
2020 Daniel Galli
2018 David A. Lazzara
2017 Vito Pianello
2015 David F. Galli
2014 Andrew Agosta
2013 Joseph P. Ventimiglia
2011 Honorable Joseph Toia
2010 Thomas Bommarito
2009 Ned R. Piccinini
2008 Ronald A. DiBartolomeo
2007 Salvatore P. Ventimiglia
2004 Paul Calcaterra
2000 Benedetto Marrocco
1999 Augustino Russo
1994 Angelo S. Lanni
1991 Thomas B. Lanni

Mission Statement

The Italian American Chamber of Commerce of Michigan

"To nurture an environment for business and professional growth inclusive of our Italian history and culture, that provides our members the commercial, educational, and charitable forums necessary to inspire pride throughout the Italian community, and to establish a relationship of trust and service between our members and our fellow citizens."