



EY US announces winners for the Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2026 Michigan and Northwest Ohio Award

Celebrating the bold leaders shaping the future through the world's most groundbreaking companies

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, JUNE 18, 2026 – Ernst & Young LLP (EY US) proudly announces the winners of the [Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2026 Michigan and Northwest Ohio](#) Award, honoring visionary leaders of high-growth companies driving innovation, growth and prosperity for future generations. For more than four decades, EY US has celebrated ambitious entrepreneurs who are transforming industries, impacting communities and creating long-term value.

Regional winners were selected by an independent panel of past winners, top CEOs and business leaders. Judges evaluated candidates on long-term value creation, entrepreneurial spirit, purpose-driven commitment, and significant growth and impact.

“The Entrepreneur Of The Year 2026 Michigan and Northwest Ohio Award winners are visionaries reshaping their industries and redefining what it means to lead as entrepreneurs,” said Joe Lenglet, EY Partner and Entrepreneur Of The Year® Michigan and Northwest Ohio Program Co-Director.

“Through their vision, focus and commitment to growth, they are building companies that move markets forward, create opportunities for their teams and strengthen the communities around them,” said Laura Trosper, EY Partner and Entrepreneur Of The Year® Michigan and Northwest Ohio Program Co-Director.

The Entrepreneur Of The Year program honors many different types of business leaders for their ingenuity, courage and entrepreneurial spirit. It celebrates original founders who bootstrapped their business from inception or who raised outside capital to grow their company, transformational CEOs who infused innovation into an existing organization to catapult its trajectory and multigenerational family business leaders who reimagined a legacy business model to strengthen it for the future.

The Entrepreneur Of The Year 2026 Michigan and Northwest Ohio Award winners are:

- **Sheldon Yellen** | BELFOR Holdings, Inc. dba BELFOR Property Restoration | Birmingham, MI
- **Bob Armbruster** | Clean Team, Inc. | Holland, OH
- **Max Surnow** | Cooper Street Snacks | Birmingham, MI
- **Lauren Rakolta** | DFM Solutions | Detroit, MI
- **Brett Smith** | Energy Products Inc. | Madison Heights, MI
- **Jason Slocum** | i2G Systems | Ann Arbor, MI
- **Austin Arksey** | National Trails | Livonia, MI
- **Ryan Niles** | Niles Industrial Coatings | Fenton, MI
- **Dr. Ahzam Afzal** | Puzzle Healthcare | Detroit, MI
- **Melissa Butler** | The Lip Bar | Detroit, MI
- **Jim Richards** | Total Security Solutions | Fowlerville, MI

These regional award winners will now move on to be considered for the [**Entrepreneur Of The Year National Awards**](#), set to be presented in November at the annual [**Strategic Growth Forum®**](#), one of the nation’s most prestigious gatherings of high-growth, market-leading companies. The National Overall Award

winner will move on to compete for the EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Award in May 2027.

Entrepreneur Of The Year Award winners become lifetime members of a global, multi-industry community of entrepreneurs. They receive exclusive, ongoing access to the experience, insight and wisdom of program alumni and other ecosystem members in more than 60 countries — all supported by vast EY resources.

Learn more about the winners at ey.com/en_us/entrepreneur-of-the-year-us/regional-programs

Sponsors

Founded and produced by Ernst & Young LLP, the Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards include presenting sponsors PNC Bank, Cresa, LLC, Marsh Risk, SAP and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. In Michigan and Northwest Ohio, sponsors also include regional gold sponsor Full View Productions and regional silver sponsors KLA Laboratories Inc., P.I.E. Management L.L.C., Tanner Friedman Strategic Communications, Varnum LLP and ADP.

About Entrepreneur Of The Year

Founded in 1986, Entrepreneur Of The Year® has celebrated more than 11,000 ambitious visionaries who are leading successful, dynamic businesses in the US, and it has since expanded to nearly 60 countries and territories globally.

The US program consists of 17 regional programs whose panels of independent judges select the regional award winners every June. Those winners compete for national recognition at the [Strategic Growth Forum®](#) in November where national finalists and award winners are announced. The national overall winner represents the US at the EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year™ competition. Visit ey.com/us/eoy.

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