



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2018 MINORITY BUSINESS AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

Wednesday, April 18, 2018: The Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce recognized Leo Barajas and Manny Barajas of Coldwell Banker, and Malisa Bryant of Herman Miller, at a luncheon at the Midtown Center on April 18. Approximately 230 individuals were in attendance. Awards were presented by Jane Clark, West Coast Chamber President, and Kurt Wassink, Chair of the West Coast Chamber Board of Directors.

The Minority Business of the Year: Manny and Leo Barajas, twins, were born into a large family consisting of 7 children, and moved to a small town in Southwest Michigan at a very young age. They moved to Holland in 1998 and began their journey in real estate in 2003, with Coldwell Banker. In 2015, the two realized that there was a need to grow their team, and soon after, they started MI Home Group. In just three years, MI Home group has grown from just the Barajas Brothers, to nine well-established realtors. Among these realtors, 6 are bilingual in Spanish as well as English, broadening the positive impact and diversity that is fundamental to the community.

This award is chosen using the following criteria:

- Must be a member of the West Coast Chamber
- Must be a minority owned business
- Must have been in business for at least 3 years
- Demonstrates strong financial stability

The Minority Business Champion award was presented to Malisa Bryant, Senior Vice President of North America and Global Sales at Herman Miller. Malisa joined Herman Miller in 2013 and is accountable for building and coordinating highly effective Sales Teams and creating "best in class" training and development curriculums to compliment the Sales strategies. Prior to her current role, Ms. Bryant was the Vice President and General Manager of Focused Markets. Malisa holds a Master's degree in Sociology from Central Michigan University, and is an active member of both Cornet and IIDA. She often volunteers with United Way, is a strong supporter of Hope College diversity programs that provide access to education for many, and is the executive leader for Herman Miller's Hispanic, Latino Infinity Group.

This award is chosen using the following criteria:

- Must work for a West Coast Chamber member firm
- Must promote or positively impact the minority business community
- Must value diversity and promote appreciation of differences

The West Coast Chamber would like to congratulate these recipients for their dedication and commitment to our business community.

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Photo caption: (L-R) Leo Barajas, Malisa Bryant, Manny Barajas

Photo caption2: (L-R) Manny Barajas, Leo Barajas, Kurt Wassink, Malisa Bryant, Jane Clark

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