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Spokane's Tim Harper, Ben Piatt of Franz Bakery Named WFIA 2018-19 Vendor of the Year

Spokane bakery leaders recognized for support of independent grocers

SPOKANE — The Washington Food Industry Association (WFIA) has named **Tim Harper and Ben Piatt of Franz Bakery in Spokane** as the recipients of its 2018-19 Vendor of the Year award. The honor gives special recognition to an individual or individuals who have shown exceptional dedication and support to independent grocers in Washington state.

Harper serves as general manager of the Spokane division for the Portland, Ore.-based company. Piatt is the director of bakery operations – east division for Spokane and Montana. Both were recognized during a surprise visit to the Spokane bakery on April 17.

“Franz is a critical partner for every independent grocer across our state. In Eastern Washington, Tim, Ben and their staff have worked diligently to establish mutually beneficial relationships with their customers — our members — with not only the promise but the execution of outstanding service,” said Jan Gee, WFIA president and CEO.

“Franz is family business, and continues to operate as one today. The Franz team is comprised of many long-time employees who are always available and responsive to store-level needs,” added Gee. “Tim and Ben and their entire team are always incredibly flexible and willing to do what is necessary to create success.”

The team at Franz Bakery Spokane is also focused on giving back to the community. For the last several years, Franz has participated in the Tom's Turkey Drive promotion, supporting Tom Sherry, weatherman at KREM2 and the 2nd Harvest Food Bank in their effort to provide 11,000 turkey dinners to those less fortunate in the Spokane region. Franz has also been providing fresh rolls and stuffing for the meal. Several other non-profits in the region are the beneficiaries of their philanthropic work.

According to Franz Family Bakeries' website, United States Bakery was founded in 1906 by Engelbert Franz. The company has 10 bakeries and multiple bakery outlets across seven states: Alaska, California, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

About the Washington Food Industry Association

The Washington Food Industry Association (WFIA) is dedicated to promoting and protecting the independent, community-focused grocery industry and its suppliers. Founded in 1899, the WFIA represents the state's independent grocers. Membership includes all levels of the food and beverage distribution industry who collaborate to promote the principles of free enterprise to ensure a vigorous, competitive, economically healthy food industry. The grocery industry provides about 50,000 Washington jobs. For more information, visit www.wa-food-ind.org.