

Grand Rapids Summit: Michigan's Family Businesses Share 'Secret Sauce' for Seamless Generational Transition

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Successful Family Businesses Meet in Grand Rapids to Discuss 'Secret Sauce' in Transitioning to the Next Generation



The Family Business Alliance Event Features Family Enterprise USA's [Pat Soldano](#) and Chick-Fil-A's Trudy Cathy White Presenting Critical Issues Facing Family Businesses

The Family Business Alliance of Grand Rapids is holding a morning conference on the issues facing Michigan's family businesses and will feature Family Enterprise USA President Pat Soldano and Chick-fil-A founding family member Trudy Cathy White as speakers.

The event, entitled: "The Secret Sauce: Blending It Together for Multi-Generational Success," will focus on the complex issues of transitioning one [family business generation](#) to the next. The event will be held November 16 at the Frederik Meijer Gardens and is being organized by The Family Business Alliance of Grand Rapids and runs from 8 to 10AM.

Soldano is among several presenters at the event, including Trudy Cathy White, the daughter of Chick-fil-A founder Truett White, Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce head Andy Johnston, and Family Alliance executives Anthony Pearson and Robin Burns.

White will tell the Chick-fil-A family business story in the presentation, "Leadership Lessons Learned from Cows."

Soldano is a featured speaker on the subject of protecting family wealth in a difficult national legislative environment.

During the talk, Soldano will detail the results of Family Enterprise USA's annual research study, which shows America's multi-generational family-owned businesses contributing \$7.7 trillion annually to the U.S. gross domestic product. Family businesses are the largest private employers in the country, accounting for 83.3 million jobs, or 59 percent of the country's private workforce,

the research shows.

The policies affecting the many family businesses, including Michigan-based family-owned companies, can be particularly difficult to navigate, according to Soldano.

“It’s critical our voices are heard loud and clear on Capitol Hill, and the new Congressional Family Business Caucus is a big first step in getting our messages heard,” she said. “It’s important that we tell our stories to this new Caucus, so they fully understand the challenges family businesses face right now in Michigan, and around the nation.”

The bipartisan Congressional Family Business Caucus was formed last year with four co-chairs: Rep. Claudia Tenney (R-NY), Henry Cuellar (D-TX), Brad Schneider (D-IL) and Rep. Jodey Arrington (R-TX). The caucus held three meetings in 2023. Currently, 31 congressional members have signed on to support the caucus.

“There are so many successful family businesses in Michigan, and they are truly the engine that drives our economy, but there are also many challenges these businesses face,” Soldano said. “It’s vital that legislators and the business community understand the need for family businesses to have a strong voice on Capitol Hill.”

Soldano is also President of [Policy and Taxation Group](#), an advocate for family offices on Capitol Hill and a sister organization of Family Enterprise USA. For more information on the event contact Robin Burns, Director, Family Business Alliance, Grand Rapids, 616.771.0577 or email at robin@fbagr.org.

About Family Enterprise USA

Family Enterprise USA promotes generationally owned family business creation, growth, viability, and sustainability by advocating for family businesses and their lifetime of savings with Congress in Washington DC. Since 2007, Family Enterprise USA has represented and celebrated all sizes, professions, and industries of family-owned enterprises and multi-generational employers. It is a bi-partisan 501.c3 organization. www.familyenterpriseusa.com

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