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Vancouver's Don Rhoads Named WFIA 2017-2018 Retailer of the Year

Neighborhood store owner honored for industry contributions, community service

VANCOUVER — **Vancouver Minit Mart owner Don Rhoads** has been named the 2017-2018 Retailer of the Year by the Washington Food Industry Association (WFIA).

As the owner and operator of 10 Minit Mart stores in the Vancouver area, Rhoads has cultivated a reputation for outstanding customer service, great selection, high quality foodservice and extensive beer and wine offerings at each of his stores. His La Center Market Store was featured at the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) conference as a model for neighborhood stores of the future. The La Center Minit Mart is the only market in its town and offers an expanded produce section, showcasing Don's commitment to serving the communities his stores are located in.

"Don's customers are always in for a treat when they shop at his stores. It's well known that customers are immediately greeted by one of his courteous employees. And that's not by mistake: Don has developed an excellent leadership team and done extensive training with all of his employees to create an exceptional shopping experience," said **Jan Gee, President and CEO of the WFIA.**

"Don Rhoads has consistently given back to the industry through his leadership on various boards and committees. But he's also made giving back to the Vancouver area community a

priority. His leadership in business and the community is unparalleled,” said Gee. “We salute his dedication to both through this award.”

Rhodes began his career in the grocery industry in 1989. He was hired as president of the Minit Mart chain and in 2000, he purchased the chain. In addition to his business, Rhoads serves on the boards of both NACS and the Washington Association of Neighborhood Stores, where he previously served as board president.

Well-known for his generosity in the community, Rhoads joins forces annually with a local distributor to host a food drive, placing barrels in stores and encouraging others to participate. In 2017, the drive generated 10,000 pounds of food for the local community.

The WFIA Retailer of the Year award honors a retailer’s lifetime of commitment to the industry and exemplification of business leadership. The award also recognizes a commitment to the prosperity, ethics, and image of the independent food industry and WFIA.

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.