

# Grocers association gives Huffman's top honor

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By CHRIS BOURNEA, ThisWeek Staff Writer

Photo by Ann Tormet/ThisWeek

Tim Huffman is the owner of Huffman's Market, which won the Pinnacle Award from the Ohio Grocers Association. The award recognizes operational excellence by a retailer.

An Upper Arlington institution, Huffman's Market has won the Pinnacle Award from the Ohio Grocers Association.



The awards recognize operational excellence by a single-store retailer and a multi-store retailer, based on merchandising, innovation and creativity, human resources, community relations and overall success. Huffman's operates a single store in Tremont Center; the multi-store winner is Dave's Supermarkets, based in Bedford Heights.

"Huffman's and Dave's are two outstanding family-owned businesses that produce the highest quality shopping experience for their customers and continuously give back to their communities," said Tom Jackson, president and chief executive officer of the Ohio Grocers Association.

Tim Huffman, proprietor of Huffman's Market, said he and his wife and business partner, Glenda, their son, Ryan, who also works at the store, and their staff are pleased to receive the recognition from their peers in the industry.

"We're very excited about it, overwhelmed, humbled," Huffman said.

Customer service is what gives the independent store a competitive edge, he said.

"We're always here. Chain, stores they change their help around so often. Chain stores, they do have dedicated employees, but our employees are more or less of a constant," he said. "We have employees that have been here no less than 10 years. We have employees that started when they were in high school, went on to college, graduated and are still working here."

In the 22 years the market has been in business, Huffman has seen numerous changes in the grocery industry.

"From organic to natural foods to the allergens that out there -- peanuts, gluten-free items," Huffman said. "Consumers are much more aware of the allergens that are in certain foods. We've had to learn that as we go."

Huffman's Market will be presented with the Pinnacle Award at the Ohio Grocers Association's annual trade relations dinner on April 25.