

While champion prizefighters win their titles through hard work and dedication in the ring, Sam Lafata has won his achievements through his outstanding career and good character.

Sam launched his business career as the owner of a leading Metro Detroit dealer reconditioning shop, which would eventually lead him into the automotive wholesale industry. His success eventually grew into the creation of APTCO Auto Auction. Sam attracted national attention by setting the standards in dealer attendance and sales records in remarketing of Ford, GM, and Chrysler vehicles.

In 1986, Sam sold APTCO to a British auction company. He then retired and consulted for GE, Mercedes-Benz, and most notably Manheim Auctions. Sam was responsible for developing and managing one of their most profitable auctions in North America; Manheim Metro Detroit Auto Auction. He stayed on as General Manager for 5 years. He recently retired from Manheim as Vice President of Special Business Development.

In addition to his professional endeavors, Mr. Lafata believes in giving back to his community through volunteerism. Sam has been on the Life Directions Michigan Board member since 1980. He has raised in abundance of \$1,000,000 to date through countless charitable events that have been held. He has also sat on the board of the Penrickton Center for Blind Children.

Outside of his business interests, Sam's love for boxing will never be forgotten. When an unknown boxing promoter and fledgling fighter asked Sam to sponsor their dream of achieving a world champion, Sam gratefully complied. The two unknowns were Tommy Hearns and his promoter/trainer, Emanuel Steward.

Thanks to Sam's belief in the human spirit, he committed his time and support in developing Tommy Hearns and other world-class champions. In the process, Sam was instrumental in one of the most successful boxing empires in the history of the sport – the Kronk Gym.

Sam is married to his wife, Josephine, of 47 years. They have two daughters; Josephine and Marie along with seven grandchildren. In their spare time, they pride themselves in being the number one fans at their grandchildren's sporting events.

Whether it be his entrepreneurial spirit, volunteerism, building teams or mentoring others, like champion prizefighters, you can always count on Sam Lafata to "go the extra round."