



Rad oShadr

## **SB 432 MEANS JOBS & INVESTMENT FOR THE CITY OF DETROIT**

- **The South Village project is a privately-owned residential and retail development on Woodward Avenue which is located on land owned by Wayne State University (“WSU”).** This public-private partnership between a Grand Rapids-based developer and Wayne State University (“WSU”) represents \$23 Million in desperately-needed economic development in the City of Detroit.
- The retail space (approximately 30,000 square feet) is 100% committed, including a space for a bar/restaurant (10,000 square feet). The space for the bar/restaurant has been partially built-out. **Moreover, a private market liquor license, subject to local quota, has been secured by the restaurant operator, Starters Bar & Grill, which currently has two (2) successful locations in Dearborn and Detroit.**
- The Michigan Liquor Control Commission (“MLCC”) cannot finalize the transfer of this license to Starters unless there is a technical change in the law which would authorize the transfer of a private, quota-based license to a privately-owned development sited on land owned by WSU.
- **A very similar technical change was made in 1996 to accommodate a private hotel development located on land owned by Central Michigan University (1996 PA 379).** That legislation passed with 100 votes in the House (1996 HJ 61) and 30 votes in the Senate (1996 SB 56).
- **A technical change in the state liquor code authorizing this transfer of a privately-held liquor license will mean up to 120 new jobs ranging from \$8.00 to \$15.00 per hour at a new Starters Bar & Grill location in the City of Detroit.**
- **It also means new significant new business tax, sales tax, and income tax revenues being generated in the City of Detroit.**
- This bill does not authorize the creation of a new university or community college-held license it simply allows a privately-held, market-based license to be transferred to a private development on university property.

**SUPPORT JOBS AND PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN THE CITY OF DETROIT**

**VOTE YES ON SB 432**

# STARTER'S

## Bar & Grill: Food, more

Enriching the  
community by  
employing Detroiters

By Cornelius A. Fortune  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

When searching for a place to eat, the average consumer will weigh a number of options, including friendliness and location. In these economic times, affordability and great service are probably at the top of most people's list.

Starter's Bar & Grill, 18426 Plymouth, prides itself on giving Detroiters a great experience to come back to.

**THE STARTER'S**  
menu consists of  
everything  
from  
sandwiches  
to classic  
catfish  
breaded  
in cornmeal.



The inside is very much like stepping over the threshold of another universe. With an unassuming though clean and well kept front, the moment the door opens, the ambience encloses the customer in a glow of soft amber light. Classic R&B drifts through the establishment, blending with the many conversing voices. There is no room for hip-hop. It would clash with the mellowness of the place.

Want to catch the game or the news? There are plenty of TV screens around. Add in a generous supply of booths, smiling faces, a "Cheers-like" atmosphere, and you have a unique place to have lunch, dinner or a late night snack (the kitchen closes at 1:30 a.m.). Others, like Wayne County Commissioner Burton Leland, 7th District, call it a jewel of the city.

The Saad family, who opened the business in 1977, started with hamburgers and wing dings in a 1800 square foot building

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EMPLOYEE Charmaine McClure (left) enjoys a break with her coworkers.

## Starter's

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that seated 60 people. Today, the building has expanded to 6500 square feet, holding almost 300 people. The menu includes steak, lobster, catfish, corned beef sandwiches and much more.

Often confused with being a lounge or other type of late-night adult establishment, Starter's Bar & Grill is in reality a family-friendly restaurant that happens to serve drinks for those who are interested.

Three years ago the Saad family opened a new location at Fairlane Mall and business has been good. But Starter's isn't just a place to eat, they're giving back to the community.

"We have 142 employees. Ninety to 100 are Detroit residents," the Saad family said. "We don't look for individual accolades."

Leland, a loyal customer for more than 14 years, decided to try the place because of a T-bone dinner for \$4.95. He was hooked and eventually became close with the Lebanese family.

"We just became the best of friends," Leland said. "I just turned a lot of people on to this place because of the value; the prices are incredible; the food and service is good. There aren't many places that you can go to at 11 in the evening and get yourself a meal. It's a family business that takes care of the community, respects the community, services the community. They provide employment for a lot of people. Anytime the community needs something, wants something, the police, church, a school, they're there."

The Saad family has already purchased property for a downtown facility and is looking at the efforts of lobbyists and Sen. Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) to pass an amendment so that the new location can serve alcohol as well. They will also open a Lebanese sandwich shop next door. The family has turned down several offers to expand in the suburbs, but they want to keep their businesses in Detroit.

Catherine O'Malley, Fairlane Mall general manager, has enjoyed working with the family.

"It's going on its third year anniversary," O'Malley said. "Starter's was a good addition because the location was formerly a restaurant. When Starter's was introduced to the center it was a nice compliment and it brought a new menu and a variety of foods too. It's always good to have a full service restaurant."

O'Malley added that the restaurant does a good job of attracting its own business, which helps.

"We are always pleased when we have a successful tenant and Starter's being an entrepreneurial independent business is a nice add-to to the property," O'Malley said.

Milly Moore, a bartender at Starter's for nine years, noted that the Saad family is involved with the community.

"They're always giving back to organizations (and) churches," Moore said. "They're contributing to the community. They'll feed a stranger off the street if he comes in and says he's hungry."

Moore agrees that it is the "Cheers" of the neighborhood.

"You have repeat customers, it's a meeting place for people," she said. "Please patronize us. The dining experience is worth it."

Charmaine McClure has worked at Starter's for over eight years. She is currently a student in restaurant management and most enjoys the family atmosphere and the variety of people she encounters every day.

"The customers get to know you so it's more like a family atmosphere than just being at work," McClure said. "We know most of their names, they know our names. The customers make you feel appreciated. We've got a children's menu and people bring their whole families in. It's become more of a family restaurant rather than just a bar."

The Saad family is convinced once people try Starter's Bar & Grill they won't have to search again for a great, economical dining experience. The combination of ambience and the quality of the food, which is prepared from scratch, should entice the most discerning diner.

"Everyone that eats here walks out with a carry-out," the Saad family said. "There's so much food they can't eat it all. With the economy the way it is, Starter's is a good bet."

For more information, call (313) 837-3630 or (313) 441-0400. You may also visit their website at [www.startersbarandgrill.com](http://www.startersbarandgrill.com).