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Martin's Super Market courtesy clerk places in 2009 NGA Bag Off in Las Vegas

SOUTH BEND, IN/February 18, 2009/Martin's Super Markets/ -- Twenty-year-old Jeremy Rowe, a Martin's Super Market courtesy clerk, has been named fourth runner up at the National Grocers Association's (NGA) national Bag Off competition, held in Las Vegas on February 5 at the Paris Hotel.

Rowe, a courtesy clerk at Martin's Super Market at 201 Concord Mall in Elkhart, Indiana, competed along with Joshua Bishop of the Martin's store located at 1302 Elwood Street in South Bend, Indiana. The two were coached prior to the national competition by Paulette Collins, Martin's training coordinator, and Maria Werder, Martin's customer service manager.

The National Grocers Association (NGA) sanctions nationwide Bag Off contests on behalf of its membership, with a national championship awarded each year at its annual convention in Las Vegas. Baggers, or Service Clerks as they are titled, are supermarket employees whose primary responsibility is to efficiently, safely and accurately bag grocery items for customers at the checkout. A Martin's employee was named national champion as recently as 2003.

"At Martin's, we continually strive to maintain the highest standards of quality at our checkouts, and that includes the importance of bagging our shoppers' groceries correctly," according to Collins. "Both Jeremy and Joshua represent the best of our already-great Martin's team, so to have Jeremy achieve such a high ranking against national competitors is a confirmation not only of his skills, but also of as Martin's high training standards."

Video of Rowe's and Bishop's competitions, as well as still photos, may be found at <http://www.martins-supermarkets.com/cnt/BestBagger.html>

The NGA is the national trade association representing the retail and wholesale grocers that comprise the independent sector of the food distribution industry.

Martin's Super Markets was founded in 1947 and currently has 20 stores in South Bend, Mishawaka, Granger, Elkhart, Goshen, Plymouth, Nappanee and Logansport, Indiana, and Niles, Stevensville and St. Joseph, Michigan.

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