

## **‘Tis the Season: Holiday Giving to Bring 2014 Contributions to more than \$25 Million**

### **New Applebee's® Serves Giving Program to Include Holiday Fundraisers at 2,000 Restaurants Across the U.S.**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- Hundreds of year-end holiday fundraising events cap a year of charitable giving in which **Applebee's Bar and Grill** and its franchisees will give more than \$25 million in donations and in-kind contributions, including national promotions supporting military veterans and childhood cancer patients.

Hundreds of Applebee's holiday fundraisers have included:

- Allendale, New Jersey-based franchisee Doherty Enterprises has raised more than \$300,000 for Toys for Tots by selling gift packs and tickets to "Breakfast with Santa" events, all of which goes to Toys for Tots.
- Williamsville, New York franchisee TL Cannon will raise about \$50,000 for Make-A-Wish America by offering guests dessert shooters for \$5 donations. TL Cannon has raised more than \$1 million for Make-A-Wish in the last five years.
- New York-based franchisee Apple Metro's Staten Island Applebee's restaurants raised more than \$12,000 for the Staten Island Children's Campaign at its 18th Annual Breakfast with Santa events.

To enhance and highlight holiday events like these and other charitable activities, Applebee's restaurants today launched *Applebee's Serves*, a program to honor a decades-long tradition of charitable giving and franchisees that have gone above and beyond in supporting their neighborhoods. *Applebee's Serves* will support corporate and franchisee fundraising and community relations.

"Applebee's is committed to supporting its neighborhoods across America," said Steve Layt, President of Applebee's. "Our franchisees take that commitment seriously, and demonstrate it each year in the millions of dollars, in-kind contributions and countless hours of support that they provide to their communities."

In addition to hosting "Toys For Tots" campaigns and supporting Make-A-Wish America, Applebee's restaurants host countless local fundraisers supporting the needy, military veterans, local school programs and other causes that benefit the community.

#### **A History of Helping**

Since the first Applebee's restaurant opened in Decatur, Ga., nearly 35 years ago, Applebee's franchisees and team members nationwide have been committed to the neighborhoods where they live and work by giving back financially and through service to community organizations and causes.

For the past 10 years, Applebee's has recognized franchisees that set the standard for philanthropy through its annual Heart of Applebee's and Neighbor of the Year awards. *Applebee's Serves* formalizes the commitment of the brand and its franchisees to serving the nearly 2,000 neighborhoods that Applebee's calls home through partnerships with local and national charitable organizations, local fundraisers and more.

Winners of these awards have dedicated time and resources to organizations such as Alex's Lemonade Stand, Muscular Dystrophy Association, The V Foundation, Children's Hospitals throughout the country and many,

many more.

## **Making a Difference**

For more than three decades, Applebee's franchisees have annually contributed millions of dollars and countless hours of effort to causes that are most important in their individual communities.

"We have been honored to have the support of Applebee's in the fight against childhood cancer for nearly 10 years," says Liz Scott, Co-Executive Director of Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation and Alex's mom. "With hundreds of restaurants nationwide raising funds and awareness annually, Applebee's has not only contributed more than \$4 million, but an immeasurable amount of awareness as well. We cannot thank them enough for helping us to achieve the mission of our daughter and founder, Alexandra 'Alex' Scott – a cure for all kids with cancer."

## **Saluting Soldiers**

As a brand, Applebee's has invited veterans and active duty military for the past six years to their neighborhood Applebee's for a free Thank You Meal on Veterans Day, serving nearly six million entrées since creating the program that has been adopted by many national brands.

Additionally, since creating the Thank You Movement in 2011 with a goal of collecting messages of appreciation for each of the 24 million current and former members of our Armed Forces, Applebee's Guests have written more than 6.7 million personal Thank You messages communicated through the Thank You Movement website. Veterans and active duty troops can go online anytime to see the heartfelt thanks of the people they serve.

## **The Applebee's Brand**

Applebee's is the world's largest casual dining chain, with more than 2,000 locations in 49 states, 16 countries and one U.S. territory. Based in Kansas City, Missouri, Applebee's takes pride in providing a welcoming, neighborhood environment where everyone can enjoy the dining experience. Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar® restaurants are franchised or operated by DineEquity, Inc.'s wholly-owned subsidiary, Applebee's International, Inc. and its affiliates.

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