



Applebee's Recognizes Franchisees for Restaurant Performance, Innovation, and Community Engagement at Annual Franchise Conference

November 16, 2023

PASADENA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov. 16, 2023-- Applebee's held its 2023 Franchise Conference in Las Vegas this month to provide a strategic overview of plans for future growth, collaborate with franchisee and supplier partners, and recognize excellent restaurant performance, community involvement, and partnership. Applebee's also held a live and silent auction to fundraise for the Bill Palmer Legacy Scholarship Fund.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20231116113348/en/>



Flynn Group CEO Greg Flynn (holding apple) celebrates winning Applebee's Abe Gustin Franchisee of the Year Award with his team and Applebee's leadership at Applebee's annual franchise conference in Las Vegas on November 9, 2023. (Photo: Business Wire)

Established in 2021 by franchisee, Neighborhood Restaurant Partners, and Applebee's to honor Applebee's late Founder, the Bill Palmer Legacy Scholarship Fund provides access to continued learning for both Applebee's Team Members and their children.

"Our greatest asset as a brand will always be our people," said Applebee's President Tony Moralejo. "Each year at our annual conference, our franchise partners look forward to coming together to discuss brand strategy, fundraise for the Bill Palmer Legacy Scholarship Fund, and celebrate each other's wins. I'm immensely proud to be a part of this iconic brand and to share in our collective commitment to servin' up the good in every neighborhood."

Since its founding, the Bill Palmer Legacy Scholarship Fund has awarded nearly 150 students a \$5,000 scholarship to total more than \$750,000 for higher education. Applications for the 2024 scholarship will be available to current Applebee's Team Members and their children in December. For more information, visit LearnMore.ScholarsApply.org/BillPalmer.

In addition to fundraising for its scholarship program, Applebee's recognized this year's

franchisees who are committed to brand success, guest service, operational excellence, and community involvement.

The 2023 top award winners included:

Restaurant General Manager of the Year: Jackie Mokyctic, The Rose Group

Applebee's acknowledges that the most important people in its organization are the General Managers who lead the more than 1,500 restaurant teams across the country. At this year's conference, Applebee's recognized the top 16 restaurant General Managers in its system: awarding **Jackie Mokyctic as 2023 General Manager of the Year**. A Managing Partner & Training General Manager for franchisee, The Rose Group for more than 15 years, Mokyctic oversees two locations, including the Newtown, Pa. Applebee's.

Abe Gustin Franchisee of the Year: Flynn Group

This award is in honor of the man who helped Applebee's become one of the nation's most iconic brands in casual dining and recognizes a franchisee that embodies what it means to be *Eatin' Good* and *Doin' Good in the Neighborhood*. This year's **Franchisee of the Year is Flynn Group** for its stewardship in Team Member engagement, food safety and operations, and commitment to updating and reimaging restaurants throughout its portfolio. They also recently acquired Applebee's restaurants in New Mexico.

Lloyd Hill Neighbor of the Year: T.L. Cannon

This award, named after one of the brand's historic leaders, celebrates an Applebee's franchisee that has displayed a tremendous amount of love, compassion, and care for their neighbors through a variety of causes, activities, and initiatives. This year's recipient is **T.L. Cannon** for its steadfast commitment to community and longstanding work with various charity partners including Make-A-Wish Foundation, Special Olympics of New York, and Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, among others. This year, T.L. Cannon hosted more than 500 Flapjack Fundraisers, Carryout for a Cause,

and Dine to Donate initiatives to benefit local community fundraisers.

Bill Palmer Heart of Applebee's: Doherty Enterprises

This award is named after the founder of the Applebee's brand and recognizes a franchisee that has shown the greatest commitment to an individual cause or organization over this past year. The 2023 recipient of this award is **Doherty Enterprises** for their outstanding work supporting their Team Members and local community following the destruction from Category 5 Hurricane Ian in Florida. Through their foundation they supported nearly 100 Managers, Team Members and families who needed financial assistance with their homes and vehicles to help them begin putting their lives back together after the devastation. Doherty Enterprises also paid all employee hours scheduled for all days closed after the hurricane amounting to more than \$135,000 for 426 hourly team members and covering 6,750 hours.

Hometown Hero of the Year: Enrique Madera Jr., Flynn Group

This award recognizes an hourly restaurant Team Member who provides great service to guests and goes above and beyond to make a lasting impact in their local community. This year's recipient is **Enrique Madera Jr.**, from Azuza, Calif. A server for Applebee's franchisee Flynn Group, Enrique sprang into action to aid a guest who was choking by performing the Heimlich maneuver, and in doing so, saved his life. A Marine Veteran, Enrique is a pillar in his local community. He is a certified EMT and has volunteered more than 250 hours to the armed forces for the YMCA.

About Applebee's®

As one of the world's largest casual dining brands, Applebee's Neighborhood Grill + Bar serves as America's kitchen table, offering guests a lively dining experience that combines simple, craveable American fare with classic drinks and local drafts. Applebee's makes it easy for family and friends to connect with one another, whether it's in a dining room or in the comfort of a living room, Eatin' Good in the Neighborhood™ is a familiar and affordable escape from the everyday. Applebee's restaurants are owned and operated by entrepreneurs dedicated to more than serving great food, but also building up the communities that we call home. From raising money for local charities to hosting community fundraisers, Applebee's is always Doin' Good in the Neighborhood®. Applebee's franchise operations consisted of 1,654 Applebee's restaurants in the United States, two U.S. territories and 11 countries outside the United States as of September 30, 2023. This number does not include two domestic Applebee's ghost kitchens (small kitchens with no store-front presence, used to fill off-premise orders) and 12 Applebee's international ghost kitchens. Applebee's is franchised by subsidiaries of Dine Brands Global Inc. [NYSE: DIN], which is one of the world's largest full-service restaurant companies.

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