



## **IHOP Celebrates Continued Leadership at National Franchise Conference**

September 28, 2009

### **Awards Franchisee of the Year and Recognizes Vendor Partners**

GLENDALE, CA, Sep 28, 2009 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) -- IHOP, one of America's favorite restaurants for breakfast, lunch and dinner, recognized its franchisee and vendor partners of the year at its annual National Franchise Conference (NFC) held in Boca Raton, Fla. over the weekend. IHOP also celebrated its continued success as number one in family dining and outlined steps for continuing the momentum to create an insurmountable lead in the category.

Julia A. Stewart, DineEquity Inc.'s chairman and chief executive officer, welcomed franchisees, vendor partners and IHOP employees in her opening address and recognized the system's continued success as number one in family dining for the last two years. IHOP ranked number one in system-wide sales, growth in system-wide sales, growth in number of U.S. units and in market share by the restaurant industry's leading trade publication, Nation's Restaurant News. Stewart also stated how pleased and proud she was to welcome IHOP president Jean Birch to her first NFC.

Birch laid the groundwork for continuing the brand's momentum by remaining focused on IHOP's marketing leadership, operations excellence and franchise development efforts, while always keeping the guest experience at the heart of the business.

Each year at the NFC, IHOP awards a franchisee with its highest honor: "Franchisee of the Year," given to the franchisee that has made the most significant contributions to the system. Regional mentoring, operational excellence and leadership are among the judging criteria. The Franchisee of the Year was awarded to Ramzi Hakim, who has been a member of the IHOP family for more than 18 years. Hakim operates 24 restaurants in the San Antonio, Texas market.

"We are proud to recognize Ramzi for his leadership, commitment and drive within the IHOP franchise community," said Jean Birch, IHOP's President. "Our proven ability to partner with franchisees like Ramzi to ensure a great guest dining experience is a key reason for IHOP's continued success."

The IHOP "Vendor Partner of the Year" award was expanded this year to recognize food, non-food and distribution partners who provide great value, product consistency and quality, service and responsiveness, reliability and innovation. IHOP's "Distributor of the Year" was awarded to Northstar Atlanta for its strong customer satisfaction, consistency and inventory management. Sabert Corporation received IHOP's "Non-Food Supplier of the Year" award for adding significant value during these economic times by providing cost savings and quality, as well as environmentally friendly products. IHOP awarded Pacific Fruit the "Food Supplier of the Year" honor for its demonstrated commitment to quality and consistency, as well as collaborative efforts.

#### **ABOUT IHOP**

For 51 years, the IHOP family restaurant chain has served its world famous pancakes and a wide variety of breakfast, lunch and dinner items that are loved by people of all ages. IHOP offers its guests an affordable, everyday dining experience with warm and friendly service. The first IHOP opened in Toluca Lake, Calif. in 1958, and as of June 30, 2009, there were 1,421 IHOPs in 50 states, Canada and Mexico. IHOP restaurants are franchised and operated by Glendale, Calif.-based International House of Pancakes, LLC and its affiliates. International House of Pancakes, LLC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of DineEquity, Inc. (NYSE: DIN).

Contact:  
Jennifer Pendergrass  
IHOP  
818-637-3603

SOURCE: IHOP