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## **Restaurant Association of Maryland Redesigns the Perfect Gift Just in Time for the Holiday Season**

*The Columbia Bank Partners with Association to Provide Newly Redesigned Restaurant Gift Certificates Still Redeemable at over 500 Maryland Restaurants*

**(Columbia, Maryland)** The Restaurant Association of Maryland is encouraging holiday gift givers to support local restaurants in Maryland by purchasing their newly redesigned gift certificates redeemable at over 500 restaurants throughout the State. Thanks to the generous support of The Columbia Bank, the Association recently redesigned the entire look for the gift certificate program. The gift certificate program still provides a win-win for Maryland diners and restaurants by providing easy and flexible redemption options as well as additional business for local restaurants.

“When consumers ‘give the gift of dining’ to their friends and family with our gift certificates, they are playing a significant part in strengthening the state’s economy. Every dollar spent dining out in Maryland generates more than two dollars for other industries,” commented Paul Hartgen, president & CEO of the Association. “Many large employers in the state have recognized the value of these certificates, using them as a chance to reward their employees with a night out when many are continuing to tighten their belts.”

RAM Gift certificates are available for purchase in various denominations. The dining public is able to redeem their certificates at over 500 restaurant locations throughout the State as the list of participating restaurants continues to grow.

“We are proud to partner with Restaurant Association of Maryland and their incredibly popular statewide dining gift certificate program,” said Del Karfonta, executive vice president, The Columbia Bank. “The fundamental principal of our bank is supporting local businesses and communities. Support for local restaurants is vital to the overall health of the State’s economy; as they are an essential component of every neighborhood. In this economy, being able to give a gift that gives back not only to the recipient, but to our local communities is invaluable.”

Maryland restaurants employ nearly 174,000 individuals, providing substantial support to the State’s overall economy. Restaurants and their employees serve as the cornerstone of that economy, by providing rewarding career opportunities and significant support to the communities in which they operate.

Gift certificates are available for purchase in increments of \$10, \$25, or \$50 online at [www.marylandrestaurants.com/gifcertificates](http://www.marylandrestaurants.com/gifcertificates), by phone (410) 290-6800 or in person at the Restaurant Association of Maryland headquarters located at 6301 Hillside Court, Columbia, MD 21046. For a complete list of restaurants participating in the Restaurant Association of Maryland’s gift certificate program please visit our website at [www.marylandrestaurants.com](http://www.marylandrestaurants.com).

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The Restaurant Association of Maryland (RAM) has remained relevant to restaurateurs for over 80 years by maintaining core principles born out of the first national financial crisis. In 1927 a small group of Baltimore area restaurateurs met to deal with some of the challenges facing the economy and the Foodservice Industry. Today, RAM is a 2,000 member strong statewide trade association operated for the purpose of promoting, protecting and improving the foodservice industry in the State of Maryland. Since the very beginning, the Association has been run by restaurateurs and suppliers working not only for the benefit of dues paying members, but also for the restaurant industry as a whole. For more information about the restaurant industry in Maryland please visit our website at [www.marylandrestaurants.com](http://www.marylandrestaurants.com).

The Columbia Bank, headquartered in Columbia, MD, is an affiliate of Fulton Financial Corporation. Founded in 1988, The Columbia Bank operates 41 banking offices in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Cecil, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, and Washington Counties and Baltimore City. The Columbia Bank provides a full range of financial services to consumers and businesses. Fulton Financial Corporation (NASDAQ NM:FULT) is a \$16.9 billion financial holding company based in Lancaster, PA. [www.thecolumbiabank.com](http://www.thecolumbiabank.com).