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Restaurant Association of Maryland Members Team Up With Education Foundation to Raise Money AND Promote Dining Out.

The Restaurant Association of Maryland Education Foundation officially kicked off their annual car raffle fundraiser this week with the hopes of raising \$50,000 for its ProStart® school to career program. The top prize is an Audi A3 from Valley Motors, with a \$10,000 and \$5,000 second and third prize respectively. In an effort to bring more value to the raffle in these tough economic times, the Foundation has added a new incentive to purchase a ticket.

Twelve restaurants have teamed up with RAMEF to make this raffle worth every penny and more. For every car raffle ticket you purchase, you will receive a \$25 gift certificate from each of the 12 participating restaurants – that's \$300 worth of gift certificates that you use as holiday gifts or keep for yourself! Either way, you can't lose.

"This year's car raffle is a WIN-WIN for everyone involved", stated Linda Eby, Chairwoman of the RAMEF Board of Directors. "There's an incentive for people to purchase a raffle ticket because they'll receive a \$300 value right away. The restaurants are excited to promote their establishments to a pool of potential new customers and keep people dining out in Maryland. To top it all off, someone will win a new Audi A3."

Tickets for the raffle are \$300 each and only 325 tickets will be sold. When you purchase a ticket you will receive a \$25 gift certificate from all of the following restaurants (there's no need to choose, you get them all!):

Jordan's Steakhouse - *Ellicott City*

Maggie's Restaurant - *Westminster*

Da Mimmo Finest Italian Cuisine - *Baltimore's Little Italy*

Clyde's Restaurants - *8 different locations*

Eggspectation - *Ellicott City and Silver Spring*

Phillips Seafood - *7 Maryland locations*

Seibel's Family Restaurant - *Burtonsville*

Giovanni's Restaurant - *Edgewood*

The Open Door Café - *Bel Air*

AIDA Bistro & Wine Bar - *Columbia*

Red Brick Station Restaurant & Brew Pub - *Baltimore (White Marsh)*

Eddie Dopkin's Restaurants - one gift card good at any of these locations:

Alonso's / Loco Hombre / Miss Shirley's / S'ghetti Eddie's, all in Baltimore

Proceeds from the raffle will benefit ProStart and RAMEF's Scholarship programs. The ProStart program is a high school culinary and hospitality management curriculum that also requires 400 hours of paid industry work experience in order to receive a ProStart National Certificate of Achievement. Students completing the ProStart program are qualified to enter the workforce in positions above entry level and are on a fast track to management careers. ProStart is endorsed by the Maryland State Department of Education and also prepares students for post secondary education at culinary schools and hospitality management programs. There are currently over 3500 high school students in the program in Maryland.

The Marcia S Harris Legacy Fund, the Letitia B. Carter Scholarship Fund and the Co-Branded Scholarship with the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation are also managed and awarded through RAMEF. In 2008 over \$50,000 in scholarships were awarded to Maryland students and industry professionals.

“This raffle provides an opportunity to get 12 gift certificates that you can use as holiday gifts AND donate to a charity at the same time. The best part of all, you could even get something for yourself, a new Audi A3. Even if you don't win, you've at least received equal value for your ticket purchase” remarked Marshall Weston Jr., Executive Vice President of RAMEF.

The drawing for the raffle will be held on March 23, 2009 at the Restaurant Association of Maryland's Stars of the Industry Awards Gala. Ticket purchasers need not be present to win.

More information on RAMEF and the car raffle can be found at www.ramef.org. Tickets may be purchased online at the above website or call 410.290.6800.

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