

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 11, 2008

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Restaurant Association of Maryland Announces Reorganization to Best Serve the Restaurant Industry in Current Economic Climate

President Taps New EVP to Better Position Association for Long-Term Sustainability

Columbia, MD—The Restaurant Association of Maryland (RAM) announced today that it is implementing a strategic reorganization plan to better position the organization in this challenging economic climate.

“This restructuring of the Restaurant Association of Maryland is part of our Directors’ on going efforts to ensure their industry has the resources necessary to ‘Promote, Protect and Improve’ foodservice establishments in the State of Maryland during this difficult time in our nation’s economy,” said Paul Hartgen, President and CEO of the Restaurant Association of Maryland.

This most recent announcement focuses on the marketing and membership activities of RAM as both operations have been consolidated under a newly created executive vice president position. Tom Foulkes started this week as the new EVP for RAM after a brief stint as vice president, government affairs at the Direct Marketing Association and nearly seven years at the National Restaurant Association where he served in various positions in communications and government affairs before becoming vice president of state relations.

“I am excited to add Tom to our incredibly talented management team that includes Marshall Weston the executive vice president for the Restaurant Association of Maryland Education Foundation (RAMEF) and Melvin Thompson, RAM’s senior vice president for government affairs and public policy,” continued Hartgen. “Thanks to our dedicated staff, RAM possesses a solid reputation that we plan to build upon in the coming months and years to the substantial benefit of our members as well as the entire restaurant industry of Maryland.”

Last week, the Maryland Hospitality Education Foundation announced that its Board of Directors approved changing the organization’s name to the Restaurant Association of Maryland Education Foundation (RAMEF). Since 1994 it has been the education arm of the RAM and the name change better reflects the partnership between the two organizations.

“As an industry, Maryland restaurants are feeling the tightening economy as much, if not more, than other businesses and consumers. Restaurateurs are making the same tough decisions around their tables that other Americans are making around theirs right now,” added Hartgen. “We certainly cannot hide from the economy, but we can find new and innovative ways in which to serve our membership and use the current climate as an opportunity to educate the entire state’s restaurant industry about the benefits and cost savings associated with being a member of the Restaurant Association of Maryland.”

RAM plans to announce new enhancements to the organization and its mission to ‘Promote, Protect and Improve’ Maryland restaurants in the coming weeks and months.

For a photo of Tom Foulkes please [click here](#).

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The Restaurant Association of Maryland (RAM) has remained relevant to restaurateurs over 80 years by maintaining core principles born out of the first national financial crisis. The Restaurant Association of Maryland is a 3,000 plus member strong statewide trade association operated for the purpose of promoting, protecting and improving the foodservice industry in the state of Maryland. In 1927 a small group of Baltimore area restaurateurs met to deal with some of the challenges facing the economy and the Foodservice Industry. They believed that, once united, they could accomplish more for the industry and their respective businesses than if each wrestled the problems alone. Over the ensuing years RAM has done all this and much more. Since the very beginning, the Association has been run by a 30-40-member board of restaurateurs and suppliers working not only for the benefit of dues paying members, but also for the restaurant industry as a whole. www.marylandrestaurants.com