



MEDIA RELEASE

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Red Lobster to donate restaurant furniture to Habitat for Humanity – Greater Columbus’ ReStore
Donated items to be sold to the public to benefit Habitat’s mission in Central Ohio

Columbus, OH (Sept. 9, 2010) – Red Lobster, part of the Darden family of restaurants, today announced a donation of restaurant booths and decorative items to the Greater Columbus Habitat’s ReStore. The furnishings and decorations will be available for resale to the public starting Tues. Sept. 14 at the 3140 Westerville Road ReStore in Columbus.

Red Lobster is making the donation as part of a remodeling effort at locations across the country. Habitat ReStore outlets accept donated new or slightly used home improvement building materials, appliances, and more items for the home. Donated items are sold to the general public at a fraction of the retail price. ReStore’s proceeds offset 100% of the administrative costs of the Greater Columbus Affiliate and support the mission to provide decent, affordable homes to low-income working families in Franklin County.

“Darden strives to have an enduring and positive influence on the communities we serve,” said Kim Lopdrup, president of Red Lobster. “In keeping with that focus, as well as our commitment to sustainability, we’re pleased to partner with Habitat for Humanity to repurpose these furnishings in a way that will benefit others.”

Donated items include restaurant booths and Red Lobster-themed decorations. In the past, ReStore customers have purchased similar items for use in home recreation rooms, small businesses and other food service establishments.

“On a daily basis, Habitat’s ReStore receives donations of new and reusable home improvement building items from individuals and businesses like Red Lobster. We encourage other businesses to consider donating to Habitat’s ReStore whenever an office relocation, remodeling or other business change results in reusable materials being available for reuse in support of Habitat’s mission,” said E.J. Thomas, CEO, Habitat for Humanity – Greater Columbus. “Sales of these items provide our customers with unique furnishings and decorations for use in their homes or businesses, while providing Habitat with much needed income to support families in need. We at Habitat are most appreciative of the Darden company’s decision to donate to us.” Habitat for Humanity – Greater Columbus has built or rebuilt more than 220 homes for deserving families in Central Ohio since 1987.

Red Lobster is owned by Darden, the world's largest full-service restaurant company. More than 300 locations of Darden's core restaurant brands – Red Lobster, Olive Garden and Longhorn Steakhouse – are slated to be remodeled over the next three years. Darden plans to continue their donations to Habitat ReStore outlets during this time.

Habitat's ReStore in Columbus is located at 3140 Westerville Road – 3 miles southwest of Easton and 2 miles south of Morse Road. Items donated from Red Lobster will be available for sale to the public beginning Sept. 14.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

[Habitat for Humanity International](#) (HFHI), and [Habitat for Humanity - Greater Columbus](#) (HFHGC), is an ecumenical Christian housing ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built, rehabilitated, repaired or improved more than 350,000 homes worldwide, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than 1.75 million people. In the Greater Columbus community, Habitat has built more than 220 homes since 1987. The Greater Columbus Affiliate, through tithing to HFHI, has also helped to build more than 230 homes in developing countries throughout the world.

HFHGC is one of the only housing agencies in Franklin County targeting families who earn 30-60% of median income. HFHGC partner families are chosen after a careful review process during which Habitat assesses their need for housing; their ability to repay a zero-interest, no-profit mortgage and their willingness to partner with Habitat through sweat equity. All partner families are first-time homebuyers who earn 30-60% of the median income for Franklin County and currently live in substandard housing. Every partner family must perform a minimum of 200-250 hours of sweat equity, which includes working on their own house and those of other Habitat families, attending homeownership classes and providing Habitat program support. Every family also assumes a no-interest, no-profit mortgage with payments based on family income. Because HFHGC holds and services these mortgages, Habitat has a long-term relationship with the homeowners and the communities in which they live.

Also supporting HFHGC is [Habitat's ReStore](#), a resale store that accepts and sells reusable home improvement materials to the general public. Revenue from sales directly offsets 100% of Habitat's administrative costs and assists in both eliminating substandard housing and creating homeownership in Greater Columbus. Habitat's ReStore is located at 3140 Westerville Road, 3 miles southwest of Easton; 2 miles south of Morse Road. The store is open to the public Monday-Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and summer Sundays from 12 – 5 p.m.

About Darden

Darden Restaurants, Inc., (NYSE: DRI) headquartered in Orlando, Fla., is the world's largest company-owned and operated full-service restaurant company with more than \$7 billion in annual sales and approximately 180,000 employees. Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. Our restaurant brands – Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze and Seasons 52 – reflect the rich diversity of those who dine with us. Our brands are built on deep insights into what our guests want.

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We hope that you enjoy receiving news about Habitat for Humanity - Greater Columbus and Habitat's ReStore. Should you wish to be removed from the Habitat mailing list, please send an email to beverly.martin@martinmarketingllc.com