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CONTACT: Randy Rogers
(313) 865-3900

Detroit Distributor Continues Program to Help Local Restaurants Through Tough Economy

Family owned beer distributor pays for its employees to eat in downtown Detroit

DETROIT – **Great Lakes Beverage**, a family owned Anheuser-Busch beer distributor, is pitching in with a program to help Detroit restaurants during the recession: It's encouraging its employees to eat out in downtown Detroit – and it's picking up the tab.

Inaugurated last year, the “Dining in the D” program was such a hit with its employees the last time around that Great Lakes Beverage is bringing it back for 2010.

“For our employees, ‘Dining in the D’ was a great opportunity to show our support for the local businesses that have been our friends and neighbors for more than seven decades,” GLB President and Owner Howard Wolpin said. “We know the economy will continue to be tough for many Detroit bars and restaurants. We know Detroit is one of the best restaurant towns in the nation and we want to keep supporting our hometown and the hardworking folks who make Detroit one of the best places to get a meal. One entree at a time, Great Lakes Beverage and our employees want to chip in to help the local economy and protect jobs.”

All through the month of January, **Wolpin** is paying for an entrée every time one of his employees eats in any restaurant in Detroit under the “Dining in the D” program.

“Restaurants are among the hardest hit in a tough economy, and that's why it's crucial for our company to continue supporting programs that can help local businesses,” **Wolpin** said. “Many restaurants are family businesses that provide a living for countless people, and we want to help them get 2010 off to a good start. Every little thing helps, and that's why I invite all businesses in Detroit to pitch in and work together so we can, as a community, survive the recession.”

Wolpin is the third generation of the family to own and operate the company, which is located on 1600 Modern Street, at Six Mile and Dequindre.

Today, the company employs more than 90 people in good-paying jobs in the metro Detroit area and features a truck fleet of 42 vehicles. The company also has a significant impact on the local economy, generating around \$5 million in economic activity each year. A frequent sponsor of community events, Great Lakes Beverage spends more than \$130,000 in charitable and community giving, and sponsors the Downtown Hoedown, the Detroit Jazzfest, the Ferndale Bluesfest and designated drivers programs for the Detroit Lions and Tigers, among others.

Now in its 76th year, Great Lakes Beverage is committed to providing quality and service, and creating local jobs. In addition to a commitment to energy efficiency, the company is also an environmental leader and recycles nearly 1 million cans and 1.4 million glass bottles every year.

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