



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Wisconsin Hospitality Group and its 35 Wisconsin Applebee's Restaurants Served free meals to more than 14,000 veterans on Veterans Day**

WAUKESHA, WI – November 12, 2016 – Wisconsin Hospitality Group, its 35 Wisconsin Applebee's restaurants, are proud to continue their years of service to America's Heroes by providing 14,985 veterans and active duty service members on Veterans Day – November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Since beginning the Veterans Day program in 2011, WHG-owned Applebee's have served free meals to 107,857 veterans and active duty service members.

"The men and women of our Armed Forces are true heroes," Wisconsin Hospitality Group CEO Mark Dillon says, "and it's hard to imagine how we can repay them for their sacrifice and service. But we at WHG are proud to offer our hospitality and thanks, and we will continue to serve and employ veterans with gratitude."

Along with free meals to veterans, Wisconsin Hospitality was also offering red, white, and blue icons for sale to guests with a monetary donation of their choice. The money raised - \$1,906 – will go to Stars and Stripes Honor Flight in Milwaukee. The Honor Flight is a non-profit organization that offers World War II and Korean War veterans a chance to see their memorials in Washington, D.C. at no cost through the generous donations of their contributors. To date, Wisconsin Hospitality Group has raised \$4,337 to send Veterans to Washington.

This year, Wisconsin Hospitality Group also introduced its "Buy a Vet a Beer" campaign. Guests were able to purchase Miller Lite bottles for an of-age veteran to enjoy free with their meal on Veterans Day. Through the generosity of our guests, 1,116 veterans were able to enjoy a Miller Lite in honor of their service.

Throughout the last 18 years, WHG, a local restaurant franchise group, through its Applebee's and Pizza Hut restaurants, have been able to donate more than \$2.8 million in combined gifts to local charities including Children's Hospital, ProHealth Care, World Hunger Relief, Honor Flight and One Heartland.

The company has established a non-profit foundation, WHG Cares, to centralize all of the company's fundraising efforts and to provide opportunities for tax deductible donations. During all of WHG's

campaigns, the company stays committed to keeping costs down and to providing 100% of the campaign net proceeds to its charitable partners.

Wisconsin Hospitality Group owns and operates 108 restaurants across Wisconsin and northern Illinois. WHG has grown in sales to become the largest food service franchise company in the state. Headquartered in Waukesha, WHG operates 35 Applebee's Grill & Bar restaurants and 73 Pizza Hut Restaurants, all committed to guest satisfaction and community support.

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