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**THE 2008 CONNECTICUT HOSPITALITY EXPO CELEBRATES
THE INDUSTRY'S WORKERS**

WATERBURY, Conn. (July 30, 2008) –This year's Connecticut Hospitality Expo, scheduled for Tuesday, September 2 and Wednesday, September 3 at Mohegan Sun Casino & Resort in Uncasville, Conn., will unite several thousand leaders of the state's restaurant industry, where they will learn how new products, trends and cutting-edge technology can help them keep their businesses vibrant and relevant.

"This year's Expo is more important than ever. In this struggling economy, operators are taking a closer look than ever before at improving sales and protecting the bottom line," said Bob DeZinno, president and CEO of the Connecticut Restaurant Association. "This is also a time when entire industries must look to their own interests, because the old adage of 'strength in numbers' is especially important in a down economy."

Generating state sales of \$5 billion annually and providing employment for more than 138,000 people, Connecticut restaurants are a key part of the state's economic engine. A healthy and productive hospitality industry provides a significant boost to the state's revenues when other revenue sources are on the downside.

Those attending the 2008 Expo will have an opportunity to see the most comprehensive, educational and entertaining event yet, highlighting every facet of the restaurant industry including:

- Over 100 booths showcasing cuisine, wine and spirits, hot new products, the latest trends in décor, and cutting-edge equipment
- Innovative new methods designed to enhance productivity, reduce business costs and safeguard the environment, while increasing customer satisfaction
- Tours of the Mohegan Sun kitchens
- Special events and competitions including a Flat Iron Steak Chef's Team Competition with chefs from all over the state competing in head-to-head regional team challenges, as well as a bartenders' mixology competition, a server technique competition and a Stella Artois Draught Master pouring contest.

The Expo will also offer industry professionals a chance to participate in business-building seminars such as “Leveraging Differences”, presented by Professor Insights, also known as Don Cipriano, and “Beat Yesterday,” developed by Walter Jessurun in 1888 and now presented by his grandsons, Brian and Barry, owners of the Vanilla Bean Café in Pomfret, Conn.

The evening of September 2 will commence with the official “Industry Leadership” reception, followed by the “Salute to Excellence in Hospitality” dinner, where the 2008 awards for Connecticut Restaurateur of the Year and Vendor of the Year will be presented, along with a special lifetime achievement award. The evening will also be commemorated with the charter induction into the Connecticut Hospitality Hall of Fame, recognizing those special companies and individuals whose past contributions to the hospitality industry endure today.

As the 2008 Expo is being held at Mohegan Sun Casino & Resort, attendees will be able to mix business with pleasure, utilizing its superb convention facilities by day and enjoying its world-class gaming, dining, shopping and entertainment venues by night.

The first ever Connecticut Hospitality Expo at Mohegan Sun will run from noon – 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 2 and from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 3, 2008. For more information or to book a booth, visit the Expo Web site at www.cthospitalityexpo.com or call us at (203) 754-3340.

ABOUT THE CONNECTICUT RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

The Connecticut Restaurant Association, in partnership with the National Restaurant Association, is the state’s hospitality industry advocate, representing nearly 1,000 of Connecticut’s finest restaurants. Its advocacy efforts are focused in the areas of legislation, marketing, and education. For more information about the Connecticut Restaurant Association, please call (203) 754-3340 or visit the Web site at www.ctrestaurant.org.

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