

NRN selects 2005 Golden Chain award winners

KISSIMMEE, FLA.— Nation's Restaurant News tapped six leaders from multi-chain operations and a contract management firm as its 2005 Golden Chain winners, celebrating their recent accomplishments and career achievements.

The award winners will be honored during NRN's 46th annual Multi-Unit Foodservice Operators, or MUFSSO, Conference at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Kissimmee, Fla., Sept. 18-21.

From the group of winners, operator readers of NRN will select the 2005 Operator of the Year, an award that will be announced Sept. 20 during the MUFSSO Awards Banquet sponsored by American Express.

The 2005 Golden Chain honorees are as follows:

- Dan T. Cathy is president and chief operating officer of Atlanta-based Chick-fil-A and represents the next generation of leadership for the family-owned quick-service chain founded by his father, S. Truett Cathy. Named to his current position in May 2002, he has taken an unconventional approach to leading the more than 1,200-unit company, stressing "second-mile" service and defining his role with the statement "I work in customer service."

- Craig Culver is co-founder and chief executive of the 287-unit Culver's Frozen Custard chain based in Prairie du Sac, Wis. Under his leadership, the family-owned company plans to open approximately one new store a week in 2005 as it aims through franchising to create a belt of restaurants from Texas through the Midwest. In 1984 Culver opened the first Culver's Frozen Custard store. He said he always has heeded his



Cathy



Culver



Hickey



Hill



Jacobs



Luther

Dad's advice: "Don't mess with the quality."

- Philip J. Hickey Jr. is chairman and chief executive of RARE Hospitality International Inc. Since joining the Atlanta-based company in 1997, he has led it on a path of steady growth. The company now boasts 217 LongHorn Steakhouses, 20 Capital Grille restaurants and 28 Bugaboo Creek restaurants. A 30-year restaurant industry veteran, he was president of Rio Bravo International Inc. before joining RARE.

- Lloyd Hill, chairman and chief executive of Applebee's International Inc., has helped the Overland Park, Kan.-based company grow into the largest casual-dining concept in the world, with more than 1,600 restaurants in 49 states and 12 countries. After joining Applebee's as chief operating officer in January 1994, he was named chief executive in January 1998 and elected chairman of the board in May 2000.

- Jeremy M. Jacobs Sr. is chairman and chief executive of Delaware North Cos. and owner of the Boston Bruins. Under his leadership Delaware North has become one of the world's leading hospitality and foodservice

providers and also one of the largest privately held companies in the world, with \$1.7 billion in annual revenue, 30,000 employees and locations in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

- Jon Luther is chief executive of Dunkin' Brands Inc., which includes Dunkin' Donuts, Baskin-Robbins and Togo's. The company franchises more than 12,000 Dunkin' Donuts, Baskin-Robbins and Togo's stores to others worldwide. Under Luther's leadership, Dunkin' Brands has created what it calls the "Quick Quality" segment,

representing a promise of fresh food fast and a higher evolution of the standard quick-service experience. Previously, Luther was president of Popeyes Chicken & Biscuits, where he helped grow the company's store count 67 percent to 1,672 units.

Alan Gould, publisher of NRN, said: "It's always a thrill to honor leaders who are driving their companies to success, and these are six of the best. We look forward to celebrating their achievements at our MUFSSO conference."

Elizabeth Cohen, vice president, restaurant and entertainment group for American Express, added: "On behalf of American Express, I am pleased to congratulate these six outstanding restaurant executives on their selection as Golden Chain winners, celebrating recent achievements and career accomplishments. From its start in 1977, this award program has been recognized as one of the most prestigious in the entire foodservice industry."

The editors of Nation's Restaurant News select the Golden Chain winners.

