Darden Restaurants Promotes Shannon McAleavey To Director Of Government & Community Relations

ORLANDO, Fla., Sept. 14 -- Darden Restaurants (NYSE: DRI) -- the Orlando, Fla.-based company that owns and operates the Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze and Smokey Bones casual dining restaurant brands -- has announced the promotion of Shannon McAleavey to Director of Government & Community Relations.

"This promotion recognizes Shannon's outstanding work on behalf of Darden and our operating companies in the government and legislative arenas at all levels throughout the country," said Rick Walsh, Darden Senior Vice President Corporate Relations. "Shannon will continue to work with federal, state and local government entities, as well as coordinate employee participation in the political process, co-manage the Darden Restaurants Good Government Fund and monitor and communicate legislative issues."

"She will also work with our Diversity & Community Affairs area to expand our alliances with civic organizations and community action programs around the U.S.," Walsh added.

McAleavey joined Darden in January 1996 as Government Relations Representative and was promoted to Manager Government Relations in 1998. Previously she was with the Orange County (Florida) Property Appraiser's Office as Community Relations Coordinator and before that was a legislative assistant to State Representative Bill Sublette. She gained additional political experience working on the "Save Our Homes" referendum and the election campaigns of U.S. Representative Porter Goss.

McAleavey received her Bachelor of Arts and Master's degrees in Political Science from the University of Florida.

Darden Restaurants is the world's largest casual dining company, with 1,139 restaurants operating under the Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze and Smokey Bones brands, more than 122,000 employees and annual sales of more than $3.7 billion.