Darden Restaurants Earns Top Diversity Rankings

Hispanic Business, Black Enterprise and Fortune Magazines Recognize Casual Dining Leader for Diversity Excellence


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Three national publications named the casual dining leader to their lists of companies where diversity really works:

* Hispanic Business recognized Darden as one of its "2005 Top 40 Companies for Hispanics" in its September "Champions of Diversity" issue.
* Fortune magazine named Darden to its "2005 Top 50 Employers For Minorities" list in its August issue.
* Black Enterprise recognized Darden in its "30 Best Companies for Diversity" list, which published in its July issue.

Each publication included Darden on its diversity list because of the company's ongoing programs focusing on workforce diversity, minority-owned supplier purchasing, and contributions to local communities.

"Diversity plays a key role in our company's success and provides great opportunities for us to give back to all the communities where we do business," said Clarence Otis, Jr., CEO of Darden Restaurants and one of the few African-Americans who leads a Fortune 500 company. "We serve 300 million meals a year to people of all backgrounds, so it's important for us to mirror the people we serve."

Darden (NYSE: DRI) owns and operates nearly 1,400 Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Bahama Breeze, Smokey Bones and Seasons 52 restaurants in North America. Based in Orlando, Fla., Darden is the nation's largest casual dining company. It records annual sales of more than $5.3 billion and employs more than 150,000 people.

SOURCE Darden Restaurants, Inc.

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