

Date: September 12, 2012  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**6th ANNUAL GRACE AWARDS FINALISTS ANNOUNCED**  
***Chef Dave Snyder of Halyards and Tramici Named***  
***Finalist for Restaurateur of the Year***

**ATLANTA, GA. (September 12, 2012)** — The Georgia Restaurant Association (GRA) recently revealed the finalists for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Georgia Restaurant Association Crystal of Excellence (GRACE) Awards. These finalists are peer-nominated and the winners will be announced November 11 at the GRACE Awards Gala to be held at the Loews Atlanta Hotel. The GRA will also honor this year's Lifetime Achievement Award Winner, Mr. Herman J. Russell of Concessions International and Pashcal's Restaurant.

Finalists hail from all over the state of Georgia, including Restaurateur of the Year finalist, Dave Snyder, from St. Simons Island. With 28 years of culinary experience under his belt, Dave shares his love of hospitality and food through his cookbook, bi-monthly cooking classes, and his two restaurants, Tramici and Halyards. His restaurants perennially rank amongst the Island's and region's most popular.

Chef Snyder also stresses how important his relationships are with local fisherman and farmers. He explains, "The best ingredients make a tremendous difference in the quality of the food, the sustainability of the environment and the financial strength of the local economy." He has worked with the South Atlanta Fishery Management Council and the South Atlantic Fishermen's Association to improve the sustainability and health of the South Atlantic, the availability of local fish and the financial future and heritage of the fishing industry.

"We are very fortunate to have high-quality local food and extremely talented chefs like Dave Snyder here in Georgia," said Karen Bremer, GRA Executive Director. "We look forward to honoring him as a finalist at this year's GRACE gala.

"The most rewarding gift of this industry is not only the instant gratification that occurs in our dining rooms daily, but the long-term success of our employees," said Chef Snyder. "Also, being able to use my restaurants as a platform to help the community through relief goods, charitable fundraisers, and special events is incredibly rewarding."

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Over the years, the GRACE Awards has been able to build a sustainable and green gala by using environmentally sensitive printing, sustainable décor, and locally sourced food & beverage. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to long-term partner, the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB). In addition, this year GRA Chair Patrick Cuccaro of Affairs to Remember Caterers will honor ACFB's very own Janice Reece with the 2012 Chairman's Award. To learn more about the GRACE Awards, visit [www.garestaurants.org/GRACE](http://www.garestaurants.org/GRACE).

**2012 GRACE AWARDS FINALISTS**

**Restaurateur of the Year**

Dave Snyder, Halyards, Tramici

Jay Swift, 4<sup>th</sup> & Swift

Tad and Nancy Mitchell, Six Feet Under Pub & Fish House

**Industry Partner of the Year**

Dennis Carpenter, Heartland Payment Systems

Lorraine White, M-Pass, Inc.

Perry McGuire, Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP

**Distinguished Service Award**

Jo Ann Herold and Kate Atwood, Arby's

Debra Cannon, Georgia State University

Guy Thomson, Pitty Pat's Porch, Proof of the Pudding

**The Innovator Award**

Linton Hopkins, H&F Bottle Shop, H&F Bread Co.

Jason Shaw, Georgia Olive Farms, Georgia Olive Growers Association

John Pinkerton, Moon River Brewing

**Lifetime Achievement Award Winner**

Herman J. Russell, Concessions International and Paschal's

**Chairman's Award Winner**

Janice Reece, Atlanta Community Food Bank

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**About the Georgia Restaurant Association**

The GRA's mission is to serve as the voice for Georgia's Restaurants in Advocacy, Education and Awareness. The GRA is sanctioned by the National Restaurant Association (NRA) to operate Georgia's only not-for-profit representing the state's foodservice industry. From large chains to start-ups, the GRA helps make Georgia a better place for restaurants to do business and helps make restaurants better for Georgia.

**About the GRACE Awards**

The GRACE Awards is the Georgia Restaurant Association's annual black-tie gala event honoring Georgia's Restaurant Industry. The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual GRACE Awards will take place on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the Loews Atlanta Hotel. The GRACE awards are peer-nominated and honor the top finalists in the following categories: Restaurateur of the Year, Industry Partner of the Year, Distinguished Service Award and the Innovator Award. The winners are announced at the event, and are presented with crystal works of art created by renowned local artist Hans-Godo Frabel.

This event is a case study in Local, Sustainable & Green event planning. The GRACE Awards gala uses environmentally sensitive printing, sustainable decor and locally sourced food & beverage. Also, a portion of the proceeds from this event will go to benefit the Atlanta Community Food Bank. The Atlanta Community Food Bank's mission is to fight hunger by engaging, educating, and empowering the community.

For more information, ticket reservations, and/or sponsorship opportunities, visit the website at [www.garestaurants.org/GRACE](http://www.garestaurants.org/GRACE).

For media inquiries, please contact Kelly Hornbuckle, GRA Director of Marketing, at 404.723.5428 or [Kelly@garestaurants.org](mailto:Kelly@garestaurants.org).

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