



For Immediate Release:

Beating the Odds; Ground Round Brand Celebrates its 40th anniversary and 6th Year Operating as a Franchise Led Organization

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Freeport, Maine (February 5, 2010). Ground Round Independent Owners Cooperative (IOC) held its annual convention in Las Vegas with renewed leadership and growth intentions. Ground Round Grill and Bar is a brand celebrating its 40th anniversary, which for the past six years has operated as a Cooperative, LLC, whereby each of its franchisees also own a membership share for each restaurant they operate in the cooperative, with voting rights in the brand's direction. A Board of Managers, elected by its membership, directs the staff and leads the affairs of the Cooperative.

Jack Crawford, who helped to form the Ground Round IOC and lead their acquisition of its brand and franchise rights in 2004, has recently returned as its President & CEO after serving as SVP of Franchise Development for Uno Chicago Grill for the past three years. "Ground Round is a well known brand which has a unique relationship with its franchisees that assures them of always having input in our brand's direction and leadership."

At their annual meeting in Las Vegas, the franchise members of the Ground Round IOC voted their approval to offer membership shares in the Cooperative to new franchisees as well as to current operators, which paves the way to a very compelling franchise offer to new members joining the group. "Over the past six years, our Cooperative led organization has paid down over 80% of its original debt from the acquisition and is now positioned with leadership, operational support and financial stability to grow again with its unique franchise offering," states Gary Serino, Chief Financial Officer. "Franchise partners can join our brand with a traditional franchise agreement and terms, or they can invest in and join the Cooperative, and receive a membership share in the company, voting rights and preferred royalty fees."

Award recipients at the brand's annual convention in Las Vegas included:

Service Excellence	St. Joseph, MO
Most Improved Sales	Worthington, MN
Diamond Sales Award	Bismarck, ND
Marketing Best Practices	Plattsburgh, NY
Community Partner Award	Butch & Lynne Beier, Winona, MN
Operator of the Year	Classic Restaurants, North Dakota
President's Award	Gary Serino, Chief Financial Officer

About Ground Round IOC

Ground Round IOC is a franchise led organization, with headquarters based in Freeport, Maine, which operates 30 Ground Round Grill and Bar restaurants located in 13 U.S. states. For more information, visit www.groundround.com.