

For Immediate Release:

Contact Steve Dubin, PR Works, SDubin@PRWorkZone.com, (781) 582-1061

AAFD Updates Franchisor Accreditation Standards at Fall Meetings

DATELINE: SCOTTSDALE, AZ

The American Association of Franchisees and Dealers (AAFD) Fall Meetings and Franchisee Leadership Summit took place last week at the Chaparral Suites Resort, Scottsdale, AZ.

The AAFD convenes meetings for its various boards, committees and councils each Fall to advance the Association's initiatives to define and promote *Total Quality Franchising*. This year proved to be an eventful and important meeting for AAFD members and franchise leaders.

The AAFD Fair Franchising Standards Committee met to update the process in which franchise companies can gain the AAFD Accreditation. The Fair Franchising Standards Committee has ultimately included more than 100 distinguished members of the franchising community who have participated in a collective effort to define standards that satisfy legitimate business needs of both franchisees and franchisors.

According to AAFD Chairman, Robert Purvin, "Until now the Accredited Contract distinction was regarded as available only in circumstances where a franchisor had no track record with franchise relationships—we could verify a company's 'talk' but not its 'walk.' But our experience has taught us that AAFD Accredited Contract status can be a powerful tool to help existing franchisors build a culture that embraces our vision of *Total Quality Franchising* and this has always been our goal." Committee members present in at the AAFD Fall Meeting were: Chairman, Richard Rosen, of Richard L. Rosen Law Firm LLC of New York City, Mark Street representing Meineke Car Care Centers, Doug Hibbing, COO of Cuppy's Coffee and More, Terry Kline, COO of Settle Inns LLC, Roy Flora, COO of US Franchise Systems (Microtel and Hawthorn Suites), Joan Ganje-Fischer, COO of Expetec Technology Services, franchise consultant and former principle of Snelling Personnel Services, Bob Snelling and Canadian attorney, Michael Webster.

Franchisee members included Cynthia Ritchie of Children's Orchard, Meineke franchisees Chris Schmitz and Mark Zuckerman, Jackson Hewitt franchisees Tom Lafferty and Thomas Webb, UPS Store franchisee and President of the Brown Board Franchisee Association, Michael Rodriguez, Huntington Learning Center franchisee (and AAFD COO) Peter Hanson, and Bob Purvin, AAFD Chairman.

The committee worked to add language to the AAFD Fair Franchising Standards to encourage franchise companies to take initial steps toward the ultimate prize of becoming an AAFD Fair Franchising Seal Recipient. The AAFD now offers a first step in the process by inviting franchise companies to have their Franchise Agreement Accredited by the AAFD. AAFD Accredited Contract status was previously only available to start-up franchisors.

Prospective franchise buyers now have objective criteria by which to judge the fairness of a franchise agreement. In addition, Franchisors with *AAFD Certified* franchise agreements have the

opportunity to promote the fact that their franchise agreements comply with AAFD's Fair Franchising Standards.

AAFD has long promoted fair franchising standards with its *Fair Franchising Seal* which is available to any franchisor whose franchise agreement and franchising practices support the principles of *Total Quality Franchising*. Although the AAFD bestows the *Fair Franchising Seal* upon franchisors that meet the Association's criteria, it is the franchisees of the particular system that nominate their franchisor and ultimately determine whether or not the franchisor has met the criteria to earn the Seal and retain it.

Other committees met to discuss the wide range of issues that make up the AAFD agenda, including: the Franchisee Leadership Council, the AAFD Suppliers Council, AAFD Board of Directors, and assorted AAFD committees including Annual Conference and Marketing Committees.

Some of the AAFD member chapters that were represented at the AAFD fall meeting were: Brown Board Owners Association (UPS), Jackson Hewitt FOA, Krystal Foods FOA, the Master Coaches Associaton (Action Coach), EconoLodge FOA, Hardees FOA, Sonny's Real Pit Bar-B-Q FOA, and the ValPak FOA.

About the AAFD

The AAFD is a national non-profit trade association representing the rights and interests of franchisees and independent dealers throughout the United States. Formed in 1992, The AAFD is focused on market driven reform to achieve its mission to define and promote collaborative franchise cultures that the AAFD describes as Total Quality Franchising. Since its formation the AAFD has grown to represent more than 50,000 franchised businesses throughout the United States. The AAFD currently has members in all 50 states and represents more than 100 different franchise systems.

The AAFD's Fair Franchising Standards, Fair Franchising Seal, Trademark Chapters, and emphasis on Marketplace Solutions led to the Association's recognition as a growing force in franchising. The AAFD's Branded Partner programs add a new dimension to the value of AAFD membership. The AAFD provides a broad range of member services designed to help franchisees build market power, create legislative support of interest to franchisees, provide legal and financial support, and provide a wide range of general member benefits.

For more information about the conference or the AAFD, please call toll free - 800-733-9858 or visit www.AAFD.org.