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Blaze Fast Fire'd Pizza Adds Junior Bridgeman and Jim Patterson as Franchise Partners

Build-Your-Own Pizza Concept Plans to Open 45 New Restaurants in 2014

January 6, 2014 – Los Angeles, Calif. – Blaze Fast Fire'd Pizza today announced that Millennial Restaurant Group, a partnership between franchise veterans Junior Bridgeman and Jim Patterson, has signed an agreement to develop 30 Blaze Pizza franchise units in Florida, Tennessee and Kentucky. With the addition of Millennial, the build-your-own pizza concept now has agreements with 23 franchise partners that include commitments to build 240 restaurants in 19 states and Washington DC over the next three to five years. Today, Blaze Pizza has 10 restaurants open in California and the Midwest, and plans to open 45 new units in key markets across the country in 2014. The 45 new restaurants will be a combination of franchisee-owned and company-owned units.

Millennial Restaurant Group is jointly controlled by former NBA player Ulysses "Junior" Bridgeman and restaurant veteran Jim Patterson. Bridgeman, ranked the fifth largest franchisee in the country, is the owner/operator of 125 Chili's and 195 Wendy's restaurants. Patterson, the founder of Rally's Hamburgers and Long John's Silvers, is the owner of 40 Wendy's restaurants. Wayne Albritton, former CEO of Rally's Hamburgers, will be the franchise group's Managing Partner.

"Super-fast, custom-built pizza is proving to be extremely popular with consumers," said Bridgeman. "We've already seen the successful development of burgers, burritos and sandwiches into a fast-casual format. Similarly, we believe that fast-casual pizza, and Blaze Pizza in particular, will be huge. We're excited to start this new journey."

Blaze Pizza uses an interactive assembly line format that allows guests to create their own custom-built artisanal pizzas at freakishly fast speeds – each for around \$7.00. Each pizza starts with a generous 11-inch crust that is pressed fresh from a perfectly proofed dough ball.

Then guests travel down the interactive assembly line to “co-create” a signature pizza or design one of their own -- choosing from more than 40 fresh-made sauces, hand-selected vegetables and a variety of artisanal meats and cheeses. To finish, each guest’s custom-built pizza is “fast fire’d” in a blazing-hot oven and ready in a scant two to three minutes. True to its culinary heritage, every Blaze Pizza restaurant makes its own dough from scratch using a recipe that requires a 24-hour fermentation period to produce its signature light-as-air, crisp crust. For pizza fans with specific dietary needs, Blaze Pizza offers gluten-free dough and vegan cheese. Blaze Pizza’s menu also features fresh salads, signature lemonades, craft beer and wine, and house-made S’more Pies. The prototypical store is 2,400 square-feet with seating for about 60 guests.

About Blaze Pizza

Blaze Pizza is an independent company founded by Elise and Rick Wetzel (co-founder of Wetzel's Pretzels). The concept is backed by investors including LeBron James, Maria Shriver, Boston Red Sox co-owner Tom Werner, movie producer John Davis, Maverick Carter and Paul Wachter, and includes the talents of highly acclaimed Executive Chef Bradford Kent, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY. The company, which has been featured by CNBC, The Wall Street Journal, Forbes and Good Morning America Live, is considered the leader of the rapidly emerging fast-casual pizza category. Blaze Pizza is registered to sell franchises in all 50 states and is currently expanding nationwide. For more information, please visit www.blazepizza.com or www.facebook.com/blazepizza.

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