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## **CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services and Darden Restaurants Partner to Support Youth Aging out of Foster Care**

Lake City, Florida – May 12, 2014 – CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services announced that it has been selected to receive a \$3,000 grant as part of the Restaurant Community Grants program from the [Darden Restaurants Foundation, Inc.](#), the charitable arm of Darden Restaurants. The grants program, now in its third year, empowers each restaurant in the Darden family of brands to help award a \$1,000 grant to support local community programs. The donation will enable CDS to provide a variety of support services to youth in their Independent Living Program. These youth are aging out of the foster care system and need funds for uniforms or tools for employment, testing and application fees to enter college or vocational training programs, computers, calculators, or other school supplies, and other items that are not available. The CDS Independent Living Program serves youth and young adults in 13 counties in North Central Florida, but all three \$1000 grants came from Lake City restaurants.

Darden's Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52, The Capital Grille, Eddie V's and Yard House brands participated in the program. Many restaurants and brands worked together to award one nonprofit organization with a larger grant and make a greater impact in their community. Nonprofits receiving grants support one of Darden's three key focus areas: education, preservation of natural resources and hunger relief. The Lake City restaurants that awarded CDS funds are all located on West US Hwy 90: Red Lobster, LongHorn Steakhouse, and Olive Garden.

"Youth in foster care have so many challenges to overcome. If they have accomplished the hard work of completing coursework with high grades or qualifying for a job, we need to give them the support they need to be successful in their next step towards responsible adulthood. The Darden Foundation grants pay for items not covered by any other funding source even though they are essential for the youths' success," says Jim Pearce, CEO of CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services.

"We strive to make a positive impact in all the communities our restaurants serve," said Gene Lee, Darden's president and chief operating officer. "Our employees are incredibly passionate about getting directly involved in their local communities, and our Restaurant Community Grants program enables each of our restaurant teams to make a difference right in their own backyard."

The CDS Independent Living Program assists about 250 youth and young adults each year. Last year, the Darden Foundation gave \$2000 which was used to purchase items that were needed by youth entering higher education and/or employment.

For more information about the Darden Foundation, please visit [www.dardenfoundation.com](http://www.dardenfoundation.com). For additional information about CDS please visit [www.cdsfl.org](http://www.cdsfl.org).

### **About CDS Family & Behavioral Health Services**

CDS was founded in 1970. It is a 501(c)3 nonprofit serving 14 counties in North Central Florida with Interface Youth Shelters (Lake City, Gainesville, Palatka), Family Action Counseling, Independent Living, and Prevention programs. More than 4000 people are assisted each year.

### **About Darden Restaurants**

Darden Restaurants, Inc., (NYSE: DRI), owns and operates more than 2,100 restaurants that generate over \$8.5 billion in annual sales. Headquartered in Orlando, Fla., and employing more than 200,000 people, Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. In 2014, Darden was named to the FORTUNE "100 Best Companies to Work For" list for the fourth year in a row. Our restaurant brands – Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52, The Capital Grille, Eddie V's and Yard House – reflect the rich diversity of those who dine with us. Our brands are built on deep insights into what our guests want. For more information, please visit [www.darden.com](http://www.darden.com).

### **The Darden Foundation**

The Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation is the charitable arm of Darden Restaurants, Inc. The Darden Foundation's mission is to maintain a spirit of service and community engagement as defining characteristics of Darden's family of restaurants – Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52, The Capital Grille, Eddie V's and Yard House. Since 1995, the Darden Foundation has awarded more than \$71 million in grants to leading nonprofit organizations that align with its mission and community priorities: Recipe for Success<sup>®</sup>, Preservation of Natural Resources and Good Neighbor grants. Through the Darden Harvest program, Darden Restaurants has also donated more than 66 million pounds of food to hunger relief agencies across the U.S. and Canada. In 2011, the Darden Foundation introduced the Restaurant Community Grants program that is dedicated to supporting local nonprofit organizations in the hundreds of communities where we live and serve. For more information, please visit [www.dardenfoundation.com](http://www.dardenfoundation.com).