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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Gecko's Michael Quillen Awarded Prestigious National Restaurant Association Honor**

**Sarasota, FL; February 18, 2013** // - Gecko's Grill & Pub is proud to announce that Owner, Michael Quillen, has been awarded the 2013 National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Neighbor and Florida Cornerstone Humanitarian award.

Each year, the National Restaurant Association recognizes outstanding restaurants around the country with these prestigious national awards. The awards honor restaurants that go above and beyond in community service and aims to inspire other restaurateurs to get or stay involved in their local communities.

Gecko's Grill & Pub and Quillen are Business Partners with dozens of schools in Sarasota and Manatee County, providing Super Student Free Meals to thousands of elementary students and supporting untold numbers of teams, projects, and events in area schools. Gecko's is a benefactor of the non-profit Y Youth Shelter, which serves children 10-17 years of age who are homeless, and Operation Second Chance, which serves America's wounded, injured and ill combat veterans. Working with his lifelong friend and business partner, Mike Gowan, through the five Gecko's restaurants to benefit scores of other charitable groups, Quillen also personally serves on several community Boards, and is the current President of The Argus Foundation, a public policy community foundation which harnesses business leadership for effective community building.

Quillen will now compete with other state winners across the United States for the national prize. One national winner will receive a \$5000 award to help support their favorite charity, to be awarded in April in Washington, D.C.

Gecko's Grill & Pub has been locally owned and operated since 1992, and employs over 300 Floridians. Look for Quillen and Gowan's new venture, *S'macks Burgers & Shakes*, to open in Spring, 2013. Founded in 1919, the National Restaurant Association is the leading business association for the restaurant industry, which comprises 980,000 restaurant and foodservice outlets and a workforce of more than 13 million employees. For more information, please contact 941.921.3924, or [office@geckoshospitality.com](mailto:office@geckoshospitality.com).

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