



Checkers & Rally's Honors Franchisees Ahead of 2019

Checkers & Rally's is closing out a successful 2018 with a lot to celebrate. Twelve new restaurants are set to open before the end of the year, for a total of 43 new restaurants in 2018, including the landmark 900th restaurant scheduled to open in December.

In September, the system rallied in Chicago from September 17 to 21 to review the year's successes and preview what is in store for 2019. Highlights include new partners to advance the brand's innovative modular construction building design, improved learning management system (LMS) and training initiatives, technology advances and marketing promotions to improve the guest experience, and new incentives for franchisees to continue growing within the system.

Much of Checkers & Rally's success in 2018 can be attributed to the brand's dedicated and determined franchisees, and the leadership team took the time at convention to recognize several franchisees that went above and beyond in 2018.

Award Highlights Include:

- Developer of the Year (1): Omer Casurluk, Erdem Aydin and Mike Tillis (GA/SC)
- Developer of the Year (2): Guy Mace (MO/AR/SC/GA)
- Quality of Opening Award: Scott Sebastien (LA)
- Rookie Franchisee of the Year: Robert Wiggins (GA)
- Franchise Operator of the Year: Shane Matheson (LA)
- Legacy Award: Bobby Barrios (CA)
- Franchisee of the Year (Fewer than 5 Units): John Lewis (GA)
- Franchisee of the Year (More than 5 Units): Bruce Keehn and Staci Force (NJ)

Franchisee of the Year, More than 5 Restaurants, went to Bruce Keehn, a former Burger King executive, who started with Checkers & Rally's as an operating partner in 1993. Over the past 25 years, he earned ownership and now, along with his daughter, owns 100 percent of the seven restaurants in the

portfolio. His daughter, Staci Force, who also is a member of the Checkers & Rally's Franchise Advisory Council, has worked for Checkers & Rally's for 15 years and is taking over the day-to-day operations as Keehn plans to retire in the near future.

"I attribute a lot of the success we have seen in the past year to our training initiatives and LMS training. Since implementing the system, our turnover has been a lot lower, and our employees have been motivated by the monetary incentives that come with the program," Force says. "The first two restaurants that rolled out the program have had better speed of service and efficiency, and we expect the same with the other three restaurants. My family has been Checkers & Rally's operators for 25 years. Checkers has become such a large part of our family, and I look forward to opening a new location with my dad before he fully retires."

John Lewis was named Franchisee of the Year, Fewer than 5 Restaurants, with an incredibly strong location in Valdosta, Georgia. He has been with the brand for the last 20 years, and in the last four, he has increased his sales by 20 percent.

"I joined the Checkers family 20 years ago because I thought it was a really great opportunity. I bought into the leadership on the franchisor level and the team motivated me to become a better franchisee," Lewis says. "I have had the same goal for the last 20 years – to surround myself with a great team, one that takes care of the customers. And, I've been motivated to compete with other franchisees and be the very best Checkers within the country. We were finally able to achieve this."

"Our franchisees pour their time, resources and talents into growing their restaurants, and because of their efforts, we're well on our way to achieving our goal of 1,200 open restaurants by 2020," says Jennifer Durham, chief development officer for Checkers & Rally's. "Ninety-one percent of our total units are owned by multi-unit franchisees, who are adding to their portfolios which fuels our brand growth and continues to bring our bold flavors into new markets across the United States. This year was a great year for our growth, and we're even more excited for growth in 2019."