

PRESS RELEASE

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TED J. BALESTRERI NAMED MONTEREY PENINSULA'S 2007 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce honors Balestreri for love, leadership, and positive impact

MONTEREY, Calif. – April 3, 2008 – Ted J. Balestreri, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Sardine Factory Restaurant and Cannery Row Company has been named the 2007 Citizen of the Year by the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce (MPCC). Balestreri was honored March 28 at the MPCC's 100th Annual Awards Dinner held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Monterey, California.

Balestreri was selected for the award in recognition of his unmatched commitment to the Monterey Peninsula. Forty years ago, in 1968, Balestreri co-founded the world-famous Sardine Factory Restaurant in Monterey's run-down and nearly abandoned waterfront canning district, spurring the revitalization of Cannery Row. At the helm of the Cannery Row Company, Balestreri continued to lead the evolution of Cannery Row into one of the country's premiere travel destinations, and has remained dedicated to bolstering the Monterey Peninsula's growth and prosperity.

In 1957, Balestreri moved to the Monterey Peninsula with his family from Brooklyn, New York, and graduated from Carmel High School a year later. He learned the restaurant business from the ground up, starting as a busboy to pay for his education at Monterey Peninsula College. In 1961 Balestreri completed Lewis Hotel Management School in Washington, D.C. He received an Honorary Doctorate of Business Administration in hospitality management from Johnson and Wales University in 1987. In July of 1991, he was among the first to receive the Foodservice Management Professional certification from the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF).

Balestreri's leadership roles on the Monterey Peninsula include serving on the Board of Directors of the Monterey County Business Council and as President of the Monterey Peninsula Hotel & Restaurant Association (1974-75). In January 1993, he was appointed by the Monterey City Council to the Citizens' Advisory Committee to give direction on the city's general plan and economic strategy. He is presently on the Board of Trustees for Robert Louis Stevenson School, Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, and the Panetta Institute of Public Policy, as well the CSU Monterey Bay President's Council. He has been a major contributor to scholarship funds through local and national educational foundations.

Balestreri has also been a state and national leader within the foodservice, hospitality, and travel and tourism industries for more than 40 years. He was President of both the California Restaurant Association (CRA) (1983-84) and the National Restaurant Association (1985-86); Chairman of the NRAEF (1990-91); Chairman of the U.S. Culinary Team Foundation (1989-1992); Chairman of the International Gold & Silver Plate Society (1992-93); and Chairman of DiRoNA, the Distinguished Restaurants of North America (1992-94). He is the longest serving

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California Travel and Tourism Commissioner (1985-2007), and has served on the World Travel & Tourism Council since 1997.

Over the course of his career, Balestreri has received numerous honors for his work and vision, including: the Golden Plate Award from the American Academy of Achievement (1982); the IFMA Gold Plate Award, the highest honor possible in the foodservice industry (1984); *Restaurant Business Magazine's* 1989 Leadership Award; the Ellis Island Medal of Honor from the National Ethnic Coalition Organization (2001); *Nation's Restaurant News* Pioneer of the Year (2003) and Fine Dining Legend (2006) Awards; and the Leadership Roundtable Conference Industry Leadership Award for outstanding individual contribution to the foodservice industry (2006).

Balestreri has been inducted into the CRA Educational Foundation Hall of Fame (1992), the NRAEF College of Diplomates (1993), the Travel Industry Association of America Hall of Leaders (1993), the DiRoNA Hall of Fame (1995), and the California Tourism Hall of Fame (1997), among other prestigious societies.

The MPCC's Citizen of the Year must embody an overall love of the Monterey Peninsula over many years including the most recent, have had a positive impact on the business community, and have demonstrated community leadership to the citizens of the Monterey Peninsula. Each year, the five most recent award recipients along with the President/CEO of the MPCC select the Citizen of the Year, based on nominations from past award recipients and the public.

For more information on the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce (www.mpcc.org), the Sardine Factory (www.sardinefactory.com), and Cannery Row (www.canneryrow.com), please visit their websites.

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