



# NEWS & VIEWS

Volume 35

Issue 4

December 2022

## From Your President

Happy Holidays!

I hope you are having a successful Holiday Season. I want to thank our members for your involvement this past year and the board for your hard work making each event a success. It has been great to see the growth of new restaurants and many new members to the ORA.

Let's Brunch! We want to share with you the achievements and forecasts for 2023 on Sunday January 29th at 11am for our 79th Annual Dinner event. Come early to build your own breakfast cocktail, meeting starts at noon.

Cheers to a new year and endless possibilities!

Dine Out Often

Your President, Jessica Keith

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News & Views is published in March, June, September & December. Comments, facts and opinions expressed herein are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not express agreement of the members. If you would like to contribute information for up coming newsletters, please mail to the ORA - 4270 N. 139th Street, 68164, or CALL (402) 493-4739.



- BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY REAL ESTATE
- CREA8TIVE HOSPITALITY SOLUTIONS
- HANDCRAFTED WINE & SPIRITS
- SALTGRASS RESTAURANT

## 2023 CLASSES

**ServSafe**  
National Restaurant Association

**SERVSAFE MANAGERS CLASSES**  
are being offered on May 13th & 14th and again on September 11th & 12th.

## FOOD HANDLERS CLASSES

Visit <https://ServingItSafe.org> to check the schedule or by contacting Nancy Urbanec at 402-444-3668. You MUST mention you are member of the Omaha Restaurant Association. This is a limited offer to the first 100 people who sign up.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

To Board Member Caitlyn Hazelwood  
on the birth of their daughter  
Georgia Collins on November 30th, 2022

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**79th ANNUAL**

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**Let's Brunch**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

<b>11:00 am - NOON</b>	Build Your Own: Bloody Mary, Mimosa or Coffee
<b>NOON - 1:30 pm</b>	Brunch, Awards and Honoree Inductions
<b>1:30 pm - 2:30 pm</b>	Celebration of Award Winners

**MAGNOLIA HOTEL**  
1615 Howard Street  
A block of rooms has been reserved under  
Omaha Restaurant Association for **\$99**/room.  
To Reserve: <http://bit.ly/3Yqlp34>

**2022 Restaurateur of the Year**  
**2022 Purveyor of the Year**  
**2022 Harold Norman Excellence Award**

**\$85.00 PER PERSON**  
\$55 is tax deductible, tax is included  
(**\$85 per person or \$680 for a table of eight**)

Please let us know if you'd like to join us at 3:00 for a  
**No-Host Championship Watch Party at DJ's Dugout (Downtown Location)**

For reservations and payment visit [www.dineoutomaha.com](http://www.dineoutomaha.com)  
or mail check to 4270 N. 139th Street | Omaha, NE 68164

**MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS BY JANUARY 16TH**

To Vote Online: <https://dineoutomaha.com/annual-dinner-ballot/>





# TOO MANY COOKS IN THE KITCHEN

## Oh, What a Night!

The 14th Annual Too Many Cooks in the Kitchen was hosted by Embassy Suites Downtown in September. During the cocktail hour 190 people were eager to find out what chef would be preparing their 5-6 course meal with pairings. Each chef prepared an amuse bouche and a representative from each group of ten came forward to choose one. Each selected a spoon, tasted and turned the spoon to the under side which displayed the name of the chef and their establishment. That chef proudly led the group back to wine and dine them for the evening!

The room looked fantastic thanks to Spin Linen, catering manager MJ Potter from Embassy Suites and Jennie Warren's magic on the centerpieces.

There was as much excitement in the back of the house as in the front. Chefs were creating their masterpieces with their team as well as showing their peers what they were serving to their guests. Dishes were plated and redied to serve. The finishing touches were added; the herbs and micro greens from Loffredo Fresh Foods and truffles and truffle oils from H. Olafsson International Specialty Foods. Absolutely beautiful presentations!

Due to the generosity of Absolutely Fresh Seafood, Smithfield Culinary, Sysco and US Foods the chefs were able to present wonderful seafood, pork and beef as well as starches and vegetables. Performance Food Group fed the back of the house keeping all nourished for the

long evening of service. The Nebraska Pork Producers helped us thank the chefs with a fabulous knife and a little cash to show some extra gratitude! The Nebraska Beef Council added to the fun with some thermometers and useable swag too!

Thanks to our amazing beverage supporters, Chesterman Coca-Cola, Johnson Brothers, Quail, Quench, RNDC, Southern Glazers, Quality Brands and Premier Midwest for a fabulous cocktail hour that was enjoyed by all. Enabling each chef to pair a course with certain wine/beer or specialty rum. Several chefs used the rum in their pour-over sauces!

Just when you thought the night was coming to an end, Brian O'Malley began the chef auction. An amazing 13 items/dinners brought in over \$35,000 to help us provide hospitality scholarships and to feed the hungry in our local community.

We were absolutely thrilled to have several new chefs participate and hope they continue to be part of this extremely prestigious group of local chefs! Thank you to all chefs and servers and to Chef Kimbler Harrold who acts as the Ambassador.

Thank you to all of our board members who worked so hard to make this event happen and to Sheri Potter who works so hard to capture the pictures of the people and the food. Last but definitely not least, thank you to the ICA staff and students for their tremendous amount of support to the chefs!





# Board Member Bio



*Saldi's experience working in restaurants began when he was 14 years old. He's performed every job imaginable in the restaurant industry from dishwasher to bartender, to line*

*cook and manager. Based on these experiences, Saldi felt compelled to open his own restaurant nearly seventeen years ago.*

*Saldi attended the University of Nebraska at Omaha where he pursued a degree in business administration. In 2005, with the help of his brother Jamie and two other partners, Saldi opened Legends Patio Grill and Bar in Omaha, Neb. In 2007, his company grew with the addition of a live music venue called Glacier and a wine bar and restaurant called The Cellar. A few years later he was hired by TheRestaurantExpert.com as marketing manager, responsible for coordinating sales efforts, customer retention activities as well as provide support to the training team for the compa-*

## NICK SALDI

*Legends Patio Grill and Bar*

*ny's online restaurant management program, Smart Systems Pro.*

*Today, the Saldi brothers have two Legends locations in the Omaha Metro. They also own and operate other companies including RE/MAX Commercial Midwest and Family Ties Enrichment Center.*

*"I'm honored to join the Omaha Restaurant Association and have the opportunity to share my experiences," said Saldi. "Since joining the board, I have had a renewed sense of love for our industry and enjoy all the facets that this group has to offer"*

*Saldi resides in Elkhorn, NE., and spends most of his time away from work coaching hockey and traveling with his wife and two children.*

## 2023 ANNUAL MEETING LET'S BRUNCH!

(VOTING BALLOT & INSTRUCTIONS ON INSIDE BACK PAGE)

A first ever Brunch Meeting is planned for the 2023 Annual Meeting. A Build Your Own Bloody Mary, Mimosa & Coffee Bar is available from 11:00-NOON. To be followed by a Breakfast Brunch and Award Celebration.

**Please take a minute today to cast your vote for Restaurateur of the Year, Purveyor of the Year and Employee of the Year** (Harold Norman Excellence Award).

Fill in the name of a person you feel goes the extra mile to make our industry better. The Purveyor of the Year can be chosen from five companies that the board of the ORA feels give a tremendous amount of support not only our mission and to their customers. Please choose from these very deserving companies only! The Employee of the Year was created to honor that hard working employee who often goes unthanked. Nominate someone you feel goes above and beyond the call of duty. Let us know via e-mail the reason you would like this person to receive the award and be honored. Please send your email to; [JWarren@DineOutOften.com](mailto:JWarren@DineOutOften.com)

A "no-host" Championship Watch party starts at 3:00 in the downtown DJ's Dugout. Please let us know if you'd like to join in more "after brunch" fun. We hope to see you at the Magnolia Hotel on January 29, 2023!

PLEASE NOTE: The past recipients of the Restaurateur of the Year are listed and cannot be nominated and voted for again.



# SAVE THE DATE

## Monday, February 27th



## JOIN US FOR THE 3rd ANNUAL

# TOPGOLF Tournament

## 6 PERSON TEAM SCRAMBLE

**Watch your email for details!**



# EVENT PHOTOS

Winter 2022



You are cordially invited to

**Omaha**  
RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

**TOO MANY  
COOKS  
IN THE  
KITCHEN**

**\$150  
PER PERSON**

**Sunday, September 25th, 2022**  
Embassy Suites Downtown • 555 South 10th Street  
All Under One Roof

5:00-6:00 pm Social Hour with Selection of Restaurant  
6:00-9:00 pm Gourmet Dinner

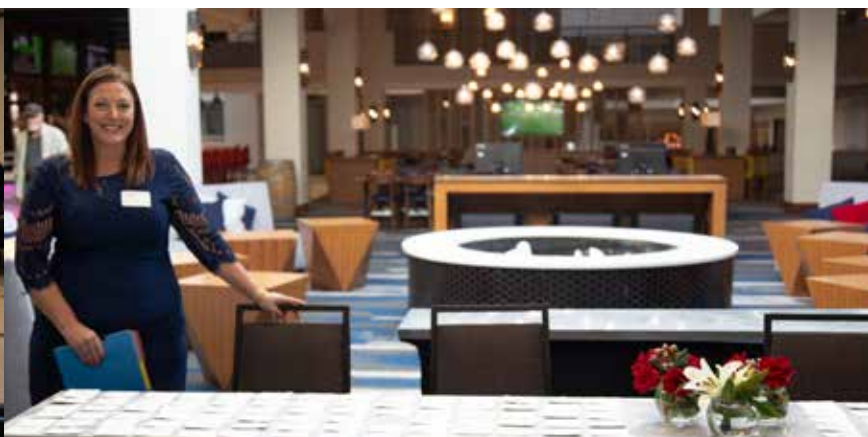
**Participating chefs from the following establishments:**  
801 Chophouse | Alto Kitchen + Bar | Clean Slate Food Co. | Corner Kitchen  
le Voltaire | Monarch/Boiler Room | Pasta Amore  
Performance Food Group | Pitch Pizzeria | Sage Student Bistro @ ICA  
Spencer's for Steaks & Chops | Stoke's Old Market | Stokin Goat  
Sysco Lincoln Inc. | Talus | Timber Wood Fire Bistro | US Foods | V Mertz

If you have any questions, please contact Jennie Warren at  
402-690-9706 or jwarren@dineoutoften.com.

8/18/22









# EVENT PHOTOS

Winter 2022

















# DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WITH PASSION AND AN

## Scholarship Money is available for them!



### 2023 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

**DEADLINE TO APPLY:  
MARCH 1, 2023**

The Nebraska Restaurant Association Hospitality Educational Foundation provides scholarship opportunities for qualified students and professionals who plan to pursue higher education within the state of Nebraska in the fields of culinary and hospitality. Scholarship(s) will be awarded at the discretion of the scholarship committee.

#### **PART A:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Please write "N/A" for anything that doesn't apply to you

Current High School or Career Academy: \_\_\_\_\_

**GPA** \_\_\_\_\_

I have participated in a Nebraska ProStart Program: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Current Post Secondary Institution or Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

**GPA** \_\_\_\_\_

I have participated in a Nebraska ProStart Program: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

I am applying for Professional Development  
(I already work in the industry): Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**In 2023, I will be enrolled at:** Post-Secondary Institution or Professional Development Program

Institution Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree Objective:

Associates \_\_\_\_\_ Bachelors \_\_\_\_\_ Diploma \_\_\_\_\_ Certificate \_\_\_\_\_

Area of Emphasis:

Culinary Arts \_\_\_\_\_ Baking and Pastry \_\_\_\_\_ Food & Beverage \_\_\_\_\_

Restaurant Management \_\_\_\_\_ Entrepreneurship \_\_\_\_\_ Lodging \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Name of Emphasis) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a previous NRAHEF/NRAEF Scholarship winner? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment Information: Please attach your resume to complete the application process.**



# INTEREST IN PURSUING A CULINARY EDUCATION?

Apply by March 1st, 2023!

## **PART B:**

In the space provided, please tell us:

A. Why did you select the culinary or hospitality field as a career?

B. What are your future goals in the hospitality industry?

C. Describe the most challenging hospitality related experience that you have ever faced. What did you learn from the experience?



# Scholarships are available - Apply by March 1st, 2022!

## **PART C:**

Additional Contact Information (Please list three)

Please provide the names and phone numbers of at least three people who will know how to contact you in the next six months or more (e.g., parents, siblings, friends)

Name/Relationship

Cell Phone Number

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**Please e-mail no later than March 1, 2023 to: [zoe.olson@nebraskadining.org](mailto:zoe.olson@nebraskadining.org)**

**or mail this form postmarked by March 1, 2023 to:** Nebraska Restaurant Association HEF  
Attn: Zoe Olson  
5100 N 27th St, Ste A2  
#238 Lincoln, NE 68521

*If you are a scholarship finalist, you will be required to attend an interview via Zoom with a panel of industry professionals. Interview times and Zoom information will be included in the interview notification letter.*

*If you are selected for a scholarship you will be required to give us your social security number. After enrollment verification is determined, scholarships will be mailed to the financial aid office of the recipient's institution or program.*

*Thank you for applying for a scholarship from the Nebraska Restaurant Association Hospitality Educational Foundation.*



# OMAHA HOSPITALITY HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY

After an absence of 2 years due to Covid-19 we were finally able to get together on October 23rd to celebrate the following honorees: Dave Dougherty, Senator Bob Kerrey, Jim Partington, Chef Michael Rhoades, Joe Thallas.

The students, faculty and instructors created a fabulous meal that was enjoyed during the inductions thanks to the generosity of Loffredo Fresh Foods, Omaha Steaks, Sysco Lincoln, Timber Wood Fired Bistro and US Foods.

The stories of each honoree were very inspiring and there was no doubt why each person was there to be part of the Hall of Fame after a lifetime of achievements. It was so fun to see them accept such a prestigious award in each of their perspectives. During the dinner The Beatniks (Nikki Boulay & Band) helped make a very special In Memoriam to honor the 12 past inductees who have passed since our last event: Bob Miller, Herman Cain, Harold Epstein, Jere Ferrazzo, Alan Simon, Larry Albert, Carl Ancona, Mac Thompson, Gene Cammorata, Greg Cutchall and Pal Gorat. They will be greatly missed and their legacy will live on the Wall Of Fame at the Institute for the Culinary Arts.

After the Inductees were celebrated with a Champagne Toast we headed downstairs to the kitchen labs to finish that celebration with desserts, cheeses and paired cocktails and coffee drinks thanks to Chesterman Coca-Cola, Johnson Brothers



of Nebraska, Premier Midwest Beverage Co., Quality Brands of Omaha, Republic National Distributing Co., and Southern Glaziers Wine & Spirits.

We would like to thank the committee who chose the inductees, the committee who planned the dinner and the Hall of Fame Board. We would also like to thank Spin Linen for their generous linen dona-

tion, Beverly Nelligan for the photography and 3 special mentors who got their hands dirty during the event to make sure it was served without a hitch: Matt Brown, Jessica Keith and Jim Olafsson! Thank you ALL and Congratulations to another great class!

## FAMILY MEAL 2-5-23

5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Join us for a delicious family-style gathering for alumni, family + friends, ICA personnel and industry partners.

Come as you are to share, connect, and discover ways to help current students.

Advance tickets are \$15 per person or \$120 for a table of 10.

Purchase tickets at the link below:

Reservations Online on Facebook  
<http://bit.ly/3PwTCP8>



Metropolitan Community College  
INSTITUTE FOR THE  
CULINARY ARTS





# EVENT PHOTOS

December 2022



## 2022 Inductees

Jim Partington • Joe Thallas • Michael R. Rhoades  
Dave P. Dougherty • Senator Bob Kerrey

*Sunday, October 23, 2022*

Dinner and Awards begin *Promptly* at 5:00 pm

Inductee Dessert & Cocktail Reception  
Immediately Following

Food prepared by MCC's Institute for the Culinary Arts

*The Institute for the Culinary Arts*  
Metropolitan Community College, Fort Omaha Campus  
14001 S. 140th and Sorenson Parkway









# EVENT PHOTOS

December 2022

















# OFFICIAL BALLOT



## Restaurateur of the Year 2022 | Purveyor of the Year 2022 Harold Norman Excellence Award 2022

*Please vote on the ballot below by January 16th, 2023 and return it to:*

**Omaha Restaurant Association | 4270 N. 139th Street | Omaha, NE 68164**  
**E-Mail: JWarren@DineOutOften.com**

Winners will be presented at this year's 2023 Annual Meeting  
on January 29th, 2023 and will **not** be informed prior to the meeting

### RESTURATEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD 2022

#### YOU CANNOT SELECT A PAST RECIPIENT

Please choose someone you believe stands out in the industry  
through providing an outstanding business as well as contributing  
to the industry through the ORA and other civic causes.

#### PRIOR WINNERS

1991 Linda Anania  
1992 Ron Samuelson  
1993 David Hayes  
1994 John Chisholm  
1995 Bill McKenna  
1996 R. Tim Pepper  
1997 Mark Hoch  
1998 Denis Hall  
1999 Matt Warren  
2000 Brian Magee  
2001 Sally Kawa  
2002 Vince Fletcher  
2003 Ann Mellen  
2004 Nicole Jesse  
2005 Chuck Caniglia  
2006 Cedric Fichelpain  
2007 Katie O'Connor  
2008 Tony Fucinaro, Jr.  
2009 Cory Guyer  
2010 John Wade  
2011 Yves Menard  
2012 Greg Lindberg/Don & Marie Losole  
2013 Brad Marr  
2014 Glenn Wheeler  
2015 Jared Clarke  
2016 Jennifer Coco  
2017 Darwin Hanssen  
2018 Dave Mainelli  
2019 Greg Cutchall  
2020 MitchTempus  
2021 Bob & Amy Freshman

### PURVEYOR OF THE YEAR 2022

#### CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FIVE PURVEYORS

All outstanding companies, who promote the mission of the  
ORA by sponsoring and attending the events and have a strong  
desire to improve the hospitality industry.

#### PRIOR WINNERS

2010 Sysco Lincoln, Inc.  
2011 RNDC Falcon Division  
2012 Rotella's Italian Bakery  
2013 Omaha Steaks  
2014 Quality Brands  
of Omaha  
2015 Reinhart Food Service  
2016 Loffredo's Fresh  
Produce  
2017 Southern Glaziers  
Wine & Spirits  
2018 H. Olafsson  
International  
Specialty Foods  
2019 Spin Linen  
2020 TriMark Hackenberg's  
2021 Chesterman  
Coca-Cola

#### VOTE FOR ONE

- ☐ Glenn Valley Foods  
☐ Johnson Brothers of NE  
☐ Premier Midwest Beverage  
☐ Quail Distribution  
☐ US Foods

### HAROLD NORMAN EXCELLENCE AWARD 2022

Choose any employee who shows strong leadership, works hard,  
is dedicated, loyal and wants to see improvement in the industry.

*\*Include a short story of why you choose this person.*

Please email to: JWarren@DineOutOften.com

#### PRIOR WINNERS

2013 Danielle Emsick  
2014 Katie Vap  
2015 Kevin Caniglia  
2016 Brian Young

2017 Bobby Mekiney  
2018 Pedro "Pete" Garcia  
2019 Linda Faye Austin  
2020 Zac Triemert  
2021 Danny Dominguez

**2022**

Please fill in your choice for RESTAURATEUR OF THE YEAR

**2022**

Please fill in your choice for HAROLD NORMAN EXCELLENCE AWARD  
(EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR)

[HTTPS://DINEOUTOMAHA.COM/ANNUAL-DINNER-BALLOT/](https://dineoutomaha.com/annual-dinner-ballot/)



# EVENTS CALENDAR

\*Any ORA member is welcome to share in any meeting at any time. If you would like to speak at a meeting, please call Jennie Warren at 402-493-4739 and schedule a time.

**JANUARY 29th** Annual Meeting-Brunch  
Magnolia Hotel- 11 a.m.  
1615 Howard Street

**FEBRUARY 7th** Monthy Board Meeting  
Stokes - 3:30 p.m.  
13615 California Street

**FEBRUARY 27th** TOP GOLF TOURNAMENT  
908 N. 102nd Street

**MARCH 7th** Monthy Board Meeting  
VMertz- 8:30 a.m.  
1022 Howard Street

Photos in this issue were graciously provided by  
Sheri Potter & Beverly Nelligan  
at TENDENZA FOOD  
PHOTOGRAPHY AND DESIGN.  
EMAIL; SheriPotter@me.com

## Omaha Restaurant Association Board of Directors

**PRESIDENT**  
**JESSICA KEITH**  
Corkscrew Wine & Cheese

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**JARED CLARK**  
Railcar / Timber  
Wood Fire Bistro/  
Pasta Amore

**SECRETARY**  
**MAURA CAROLAN**  
Performance Food Group

**TREASURER**  
**JOEL PRIEST**  
Hospitality  
Management Systems

**IMMEDIATE  
PAST PRESIDENT**  
**MATT BROWN**  
V Mertz

**EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR**  
**JENNIE WARREN**

**EX-OFFICIO  
DIRECTORS**  
**DAN LUDWIG**  
Douglas County  
Health Dept.  
**LARISSA CODR**  
Heartland Payment Systems

**RESTAURANT DIRECTORS**  
**NATALIE HANKINS**  
DJ's Dugout

**MJ POTTER**  
Embassy Suites-Downtown  
**ROLAND DAY**  
J Gilberts

**CAITLYN HAZELWOOD**  
Jams-Old Market  
**NICK SALDI**  
Legends Patio Grill & Bar

**JAKE BIEL**  
Mantra  
**BENN SIEFF**  
801 Chophouse

**GAVIN PINO**  
Restaurants Inc,  
Stokes-Old Market  
**SHAWN PHIFER**  
Star Top Catering

**PURVEYOR DIRECTORS**  
**RON METZ**  
Chesterman Coca-Cola

**VICKI JENKINS**  
Johnson Bros.  
**JERRY SMITH**  
Loffredo Fresh Produce

**BRYON ZECHMANN**  
Premier Midwest  
**LAUREN WILLETT**  
Quality Brands

**CRAIG ULRICH**  
Quail Distributing  
**JOHN DiGIORGIO**  
Republic National  
Distributing Co.

**DICKIE GREINER**  
Southern Glazer's  
Wine and Spirits  
**DAN WATTS**  
Sysco Lincoln Inc.

**JEREMY MEDVED**  
US Foods

### LIAISONS

**BRAIN BARKS** Food Bank for the Heartland  
**ZOE OLSON** Nebraska Hospitality Association  
**BRIAN O'MALLEY** Institute for the Culinary Arts @ MCC  
**SHERI POTTER** DiTendenza Food Photography and Design



## TRIAD MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Omaha Restaurant Association / Nebraska Hospitality Association / National Restaurant Association



### 2023 MEMBERSHIP DUES INVESTMENT

Are you looking for something more for your membership? If you are a restaurateur we have a deal for you. For an additional \$200 you can receive the benefits of the Nebraska Hospitality Association and the National Restaurant Association. For additional information please visit [www.NebraskaDining.org](http://www.NebraskaDining.org) to see what they can do for you!

- ☐ **SINGLE RESTAURANT MEMBER** .....\$200
- ☐ **MULTI-UNIT RESTAURANT MEMBER** .....\$350  
TRIAD MEMBERSHIP N/A TO MULTI-UNITS
- ☐ **PURVEYOR MEMBER** .....\$250
- ☐ **BAR/LOUNGE MEMBER** .....\$150
- ☐ **TRIAD MEMBER\*** .....\$400

\* This membership is *only* available for current  
ORA members of single concept restaurants. **TOTAL \$** \_\_\_\_\_

To pay by check: Make out to Omaha Restaurant Association and mail to:  
Omaha Restaurant Association, 4270 North 139th Street, Omaha NE 68164.  
To make your payment online: Visit our website [www.DineOutOmaha.com](http://www.DineOutOmaha.com)

### PLEASE FILL OUT ALL INFORMATION BELOW

Name of Company \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Representative \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Representative \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Company Website \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Business \_\_\_\_\_

REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_