



## **Darden Restaurants Announces Upcoming Retirement of Chief HR Executive and Succession Plan**

ORLANDO, Fla., April 15, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Darden Restaurants today announced that Dan Lyons, Senior Vice President of Human Resources, has elected to retire from the company effective December 31, 2009. He will be succeeded by Daisy Ng on June 1, 2009, and remain in a transition support role for the balance of the calendar year.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050203/FLTH026LOGO> )

"Dan has played an instrumental role in establishing a strong Human Resources function at Darden," said Clarence Otis, Darden's Chairman and CEO. "Under his leadership, Darden has strengthened its talent management capabilities, leadership development efforts, compensation programs, and HR systems and leadership ranks, creating the people foundation necessary for our company to successfully grow by more than 500 restaurants, 65,000 employees and \$3.5 billion in sales during his tenure. And he did it all while helping Darden foster a culture that values diversity, caring and respect. We thank Dan for 17 years of valuable service and wish him well in his retirement.

"And thanks to Dan, we didn't have to look far to find his capable replacement," Otis continued. "It's a tribute to his legacy of developing leadership bench strength that we have someone of Daisy Ng's caliber to step up and lead the HR organization. She brings tremendous new skills and will help us fully capture the long-term growth opportunity available to Darden."

In her new role, Ng will report directly to Otis and become a member of Darden's Executive Team. She joined the company in October 2005 as Senior Vice President of Talent Management and has led a multi-year strategy to design systems and tools that better enable Darden to identify and develop outstanding leaders and drive stronger employee engagement.

Ng brings more than 25 years of experience to her new role, having held various senior executive positions in a number of highly regarded global companies in Asia Pacific, Canada and the United States. Her experience has included roles across a variety of HR functions, including strategic planning; organization design and effectiveness; training and development; talent management; international and domestic relocations; staffing and planning; compensation and benefits; and HR information systems. Immediately prior to joining Darden, she served as Vice President, Workforce Development of Hewlett Packard.

Ng holds a bachelor's and a master's degree in business administration from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is recognized as a Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) by the Human Resources Professionals Association of Ontario, Canada, and served as a member of the Association of Training and Development (ASTD) Board of Directors from 2006 to 2008.

Lyons first joined the company in 1993 as Olive Garden's Senior Vice President of Personnel before spending the past 12 years in his current role.

### **About Darden Restaurants**

Darden Restaurants, Inc., (NYSE: DRI), the world's largest full-service restaurant company, owns and operates more than 1,700 restaurants that generate \$7 billion in annual sales. Headquartered in Orlando, and employing 180,000 people, Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. Our restaurant brands - Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze and Seasons 52 - 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).

SOURCE Darden Restaurants, Inc.

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