CHIPOTLE ADDS UNIVERSITY OF DENVER DEGREE PROGRAM TO EDUCATION OFFERINGS; ANNOUNCES INITIAL RESULTS FROM EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Chipotle to offer educational assistance to employees who pursue a Bachelor of Arts at DU Initial data shows 89 percent of student-employees stay with Chipotle after enrolling in tuition assistance programs; student-employees also see greater likelihood of promotion

DENVER--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 22, 2017-- Chipotle Mexican Grill (NYSE: CMG) has added University of Denver (DU) to the universe of colleges and universities that employees have access to through a Chipotle partnership with Guild Education. Through the partnership, Chipotle employees can earn a degree through DU's Bachelor of Arts completion program in its University College. The partnership with DU adds to existing educational benefits the company already provides its employees, including up to $5,250 in tuition reimbursement, and a discounted tuition program through Guild that offers reduced cost courses and degree programs at a number of colleges and universities.

Since expanding its education offerings in 2015 to include hourly workers as well as salaried employees, Chipotle has seen better than expected participation, improved retention, and higher promotion rates among participating employees. Since expanding the program, Chipotle has provided assistance to nearly 3,500 employees. The company's education programs currently offer more than 2,000 class and program options to employees. The addition of the new degree program through DU's University College offers a return to Chipotle's roots of sorts, given that the first Chipotle restaurant is located just steps from DU's main campus.

"Our goal in offering really strong educational benefits to our employees is to help prepare them for long-term and fulfilling careers," said Steve Ells, founder, chairman and CEO at Chipotle. "A year into the program, we are hearing tremendous feedback from our employees, and seeing strong results in terms of enrollment, retention, and internal promotions among employees who are participating in the program."

To help expand its educational benefits program, including the new degree at DU, Chipotle partnered with Guild Education and Guild's network of non-profit colleges. Data from Guild Education shows that Chipotle's restaurant employees enrolled in its programs who go back to school are twice as likely to be promoted at Chipotle, as compared to their peers. Restaurant employees enrolled in an education program with Guild are also nearly twice as likely to stay at Chipotle -- 89 percent of employees who enrolled stayed with the company for the following nine months.

A Career with Purpose

Carlos Grajeda, a service manager at Chipotle in Denver, was one of the first employees to take advantage of continuing education benefits through Guild. After struggling to complete college twice, Grajeda began working at Chipotle and soon after learned about Chipotle's education benefits.

"Chipotle offered me an affordable way to go back to school, and I'm beyond grateful," Grajeda said. "I worked with Guild to complete a management training program and earn some college credits, and then I decided to take the next step and enroll in a degree program at Colorado State University-Global Campus. My life has been filled with more purpose and direction than ever before."

"Chipotle team members are not only hard-working employees - they are also dedicated learners on the path to an entirely new form of the American apprenticeship," said Rachel Carlson, CEO and co-founder of Guild Education. "Companies like Chipotle are leading on new and innovative solutions to support and retain great employees like Carlos."

ABOUT CHIPOTLE

Steve Ells, Founder, Chairman and CEO, started Chipotle with the idea that food served fast did not have to be a typical fast food experience. Today, Chipotle continues to offer a focused menu of burritos, tacos, burrito bowls, and salads made from fresh, high-quality raw ingredients, prepared using classic cooking methods and served in an interactive style allowing people to get exactly what they want. Chipotle seeks out extraordinary ingredients that are not only fresh, but that are raised responsibly, with respect for the animals, land, and people who produce them. Chipotle prepares its food using real, whole ingredients, and is the only national restaurant brand that prepares its food using no added colors, flavors or other industrial additives typically found in fast food. Chipotle opened with a single restaurant in Denver in 1993 and now operates more than 2,300 restaurants. For more information, visit Chipotle.com

ABOUT GUILD EDUCATION

Guild Education helps employers offer Education as a Benefit to their employees. Guild's technology makes offering education benefits and tuition reimbursement an easy choice for leading companies, with a platform that helps HR leaders turn their education cost centers into a positive ROI. Guild's diverse network of online, nonprofit universities, including the University of Denver, offers a range of programs from GEDs through bachelor's and master's degrees, along with advising and retention

coaching to help each student navigate the worlds of work and college. To learn more about Guild, visit www.GuildEducation.com/for_companies.

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