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Restaurant Industry Veteran Named President and CEO of Benihana Inc.

MIAMI, Feb. 5, 2014 – The Board of Directors of Benihana Inc. (“Benihana”), the nation’s leading operator of Japanese theme and sushi restaurants, today announced that restaurant industry veteran Steve Shlemon has been named the company’s new President and Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately.

Mr. Shlemon joins Benihana after serving as President of Carrabba’s Italian Grill (“Carrabba’s”), which he helped grow from 15 restaurants to more than 230 locations across the United States. In addition to his 13-year role as President of Carrabba’s, Mr. Shlemon was an Executive Vice President of Bloomin’ Brands Inc. (Nasdaq:BLMN), the parent company of Outback Steakhouse, Bonefish Grill and Carrabba’s.

A 35-year veteran of the industry, Mr. Shlemon was one of Outback Steakhouse’s first franchise partners outside of Florida and was largely responsible for that restaurant chain’s success in northern and western Texas. Mr. Shlemon began his career at Steak and Ale Restaurant Corporation and was also previously an executive at TGI Fridays Inc.

Mr. Shlemon, who succeeds Richard Stockinger as President and CEO, will be responsible for all 63 Benihana restaurants across the U.S., as well as the Company’s RA Sushi and Haru locations.

Richard Leonard, Managing Director at Angelo, Gordon & Co., said, “When we invested in the Benihana family of restaurants, we knew that we were getting involved with three of the world’s premiere restaurant concepts.” He added, “The Company and its subsidiaries have a legacy of excellence, and we are confident that Steve Shlemon is the right leader to grow our brands dramatically in the coming years. Furthermore, I want to thank Richard Stockinger for his dedication, passion and service. He has been a vital member of the Benihana family and his expertise was instrumental in the success of the Company’s Renewal Program. We are sincerely grateful for all of Rich’s hard work and wish him all the best in his future endeavors – I am confident he will have continued success.”

“The prospect of joining a dynamic and revered institution like Benihana, and overseeing its future growth, was the opportunity of a lifetime for someone who loves this industry as I do,” Mr. Shlemon said. “Benihana brought the intricacies of Japanese cuisine to America back in 1964, and introduced American audiences to a new form of dining. RA Sushi and Haru offer top quality sushi with fresh and exciting atmospheres. These are outstanding brands with exceptional people, and I know we will have great success together.”

About Benihana

Headquartered in Miami, Benihana Inc. is the nation’s leading operator of Japanese theme and sushi restaurants with 95 restaurants nationwide, including 63 Benihana restaurants, seven Haru sushi restaurants and 25 RA Sushi restaurants. In addition, 15 franchised Benihana restaurants are operating in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean. To learn more about Benihana Inc. and its three restaurant concepts, please view the corporate video at www.benihana.com/about/video.

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