PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab Raises Nearly $300,000 for the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--May 27, 2005-- Al Schuman Scholarship Challenge Fund brings $250,000 and Ecolab reaches its goal of $40,000 at its Silent Auction The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) announced today that St. Paul-based Ecolab Inc. (NYSE:ECL), the industry leader in the sanitation and food safety business, raised nearly $300,000 at this year's National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show in Chicago, May 21-May 24. The money raised is a combination of a $250,000 contribution from Ecolab Chairman Al Schuman for a new matching fund called the Al Schuman Scholarship Challenge Fund, and $40,000 in donations from its Silent Auction. Ecolab has now contributed more than $725,000 over the past three years to the NRAEF, making it one of the organization's largest givers.

"We are incredibly grateful to Al Schuman for his very generous contribution and to Ecolab for its long-standing support and leadership in the industry and to the NRAEF," said Mary M. Adolf, NRAEF president and chief operating officer. "We salute Al and Ecolab's commitment to food safety and to serving the needs of operators in educating and mentoring our industry's future leaders."

At the "Salute to Excellence Awards Gala" on Saturday evening, May 21, Schuman presented the NRAEF with $250,000 for the Al Schuman Scholarship Challenge Fund. The NRAEF immediately launched a campaign to match and double the size of the donation to at least $500,000 within one year. Scholarships will be given to select qualified applicants who have been accepted into a qualified restaurant and/or foodservice management collegiate program.

"Ours is the best profession in the world, and the best profession in the world needs the best people in the world working in it. The NRAEF makes this possible with its scholarships, mentoring opportunities and development programs," said Schuman. "I'm proud to support NRAEF in its effort to help those who are just starting out in this industry. NRAEF scholarship recipients are the individuals who will build our industry into something even greater in the years to come."

More than 500 industry representatives took part in Ecolab's Silent Auction on Sunday, May 22 and bid on items from electronics to fabulous vacation packages. Auction items included resort and restaurant packages, sports and celebrity memorabilia, culinary education and equipment and many other interesting and exciting items.

"The NRAEF is a very worthy organization and we couldn't be more delighted to contribute to its cause," said Doug Baker, President and CEO of Ecolab. "Ecolab is dedicated to supporting this industry, the NRAEF and operators in providing excellence in cleaning and food safety programs and in further enhancing the education of our industry's future workforce."

The importance of providing students with scholarships to pursue a restaurant and foodservice education is vital to maintaining the industry's role as the cornerstone of rewarding career and employment opportunities. As the NRAEF focuses on risk management, recruitment and retention, scholarships provide an opportunity to recruit qualified and educated employees. A key component in the recruitment and retention of the best employees to the restaurant and foodservice industry is the NRAEF's pledge to provide scholarships - essential to the development of an educated workforce - to high school students, undergraduate students, and educators.

About Ecolab

With 2004 sales of $4.2 billion, Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, pest elimination, maintenance and repair products for the hospitality, foodservice, institutional and industrial markets. Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol ECL. Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at www.ecolab.com.

About NRAEF

The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to fulfilling the e educational mission of the National Restaurant Association. As the nation's largest private sector employer, the restaurant and foodservice industry is the cornerstone of the American economy, of career-and-employment opportunities, and of local communities. Focusing on three key strategies of risk management, recruitment, and retention, the NRAEF is the premier provider of educational resources, materials, and programs, which address attracting, developing and retaining the industry's workforce. Sales from all NRAEF products and services benefit the industry by directly supporting the NRAEF's educational initiatives. For more information on the NRAEF, visit www.nraef.org.

CONTACT: Ecolab Inc., St. Paul
Michael Monahan, 651-293-2809
or
NRAEF
Ellen Nash, 312-715-5372
or
Weber Shandwick
Barb Hemberger, 952-346-6232

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