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Ralph Aguera Honored with 2009 ABL “Top Shelf Award”
Calls on Licensees to Build Industry Brand and Engage in Communities



Ralph Aguera

Bethesda, MD – March 11, 2009 – The American Beverage Licensees (ABL) has honored Ralph D. Aguera with its 2009 ABL Top Shelf Award. Mr. Aguera is Vice President, Trade Relations for Brown-Forman, one of the largest American-owned spirits and wine companies.

The Top Shelf Award recognizes those who have demonstrated excellence over their careers in the beverage alcohol industry and have a successful history of positive influence on their communities. It is the highest honor given by ABL and was presented to Mr. Aguera on March 2nd at the 7th Annual ABL Convention in Las Vegas.

In his acceptance remarks, Aguera called on beverage alcohol retailers to be active participants in their industry.

“All of us need to stay involved and protect our industry each and every day,” said Aguera. “Join industry associations, be innovative, and take advantage of direction from suppliers, wholesalers and organizations like WSWA, DISCUS, and The Century Council.”

Aguera went on to explain the importance of retailers doing what they can to help protect and enhance the reputation of the beverage alcohol industry.

“We as an industry are doing some great things together to enrich the lives of an ever more diverse consumer base,” said Aguera. “But we need to continue to do so responsibly by holding ourselves to high standards. We need to be proactive in doing our part to prevent the irresponsible consumption of alcohol. Yes, it’s good for business, but moreover it’s the right thing to do.”

In addition to his nearly 49-year involvement in the industry, Mr. Aguera has been the president of Sky Ranch for Boys Foundation since 1994. Sky Ranch for Boys is a unique 3,000-acre facility

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on the South Dakota/Montana border where troubled kids from all parts of America get a second chance and a fresh start.

"Please do what you can to get involved; there's enough need out there," said Aguera. "I adopted Sky Ranch as an organization I'm involved with. Perhaps you and/or your business can find a worthy organization in your community to support."

Ralph and his wife, Judy, reside in Louisville, Kentucky. They are the proud parents of two children, Celeste and Ralph David, and grandparents to Jack and Sofia.

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American Beverage Licensees is the preeminent national trade association for retail alcohol beverage license holders. Its members, who are often independent, family owned operators, are comprised of on-premise and off-premise retailers who provide hundreds of thousands of jobs and annually infuse billions of dollars into the American economy.

Brown-Forman Corporation is a producer and marketer of fine quality beverage alcohol brands, including Jack Daniel's, Southern Comfort, Finlandia Vodka, Tequila Herradura, el Jimador Tequila, Canadian Mist, Fetzer and Bonterra Wines, and Korbel California Champagnes.