



PRESS RELEASE

Kissimmee Police Fatalities Have a Personal Impact at Woody's Bar-B-Q of Winter Haven *Restaurant Rallying Winter Haven to Support Officer Baxter's and Sgt. Howard's Families*

Jacksonville, Florida, August 24, 2017 – Woody's Bar-B-Q of Winter Haven is fundraising to support the families of two Kissimmee police officers, Officer Matthew Baxter and Sgt. Richard "Sam" Howard, who were fatally shot on Friday, August 18 while responding to a call reporting suspicious activity.



"Woody's Bar-B-Q has a tradition of supporting our police, fire fighter, and military heroes, but this loss is especially personal," said Carolyn Gannaway, co-owner and general manager of the Winter Haven location. "Sgt. Howard's father, who is also named Sam, is one of our employees. We want to come together as a community to help Sgt. Howard's and Officer Baxter's families during this extremely difficult time. We started fundraising right away, and the response from our guests has already been amazing."

Located at 1088 Havendale Blvd. NW, Woody's Bar-B-Q of Winter Haven is collecting cash donations from guests which will be donated to the fund set up by the City of Kissimmee for the Howard and Baxter families. The restaurant also plans to donate 10% of their sales on Saturday, September 2 to the fund.

"We expect a great turnout that Saturday. We already have some big specials planned for the busy Labor Day weekend, and we know the Winter Haven community will rally around this cause," said Gannaway.

A franchise company with 24 locations across North America, the Woody's Bar-B-Q corporate office in Jacksonville, Fl. is also supporting the Howard and Baxter families by contributing \$500 to the memorial fund.

"Families are at the core of what Woody's Bar-B-Q is all about," says Yolanda Mills, president and co-founder of Woody's Bar-B-Q. "All of our franchises are family-owned-and-operated, as is the company itself. Needless to say, our hearts go out to the Howard and Baxter families. We are proud of the Gannaway family for taking the lead on this fundraiser for the memorial fund and are heartened to see how the Winter Haven community is coming together to show its support."

For those who wish to make a donation to the memorial fund through Woody's Bar-B-Q of Winter Haven, the restaurant is open from 11:00 AM - 9:00 PM daily, and is located in the Spring Lake Plaza shopping center around the corner from Cobb Grand 10 Cinema. To learn more about Woody's Bar-B-Q, interested parties are invited to visit www.woodys.com.

About Woody's Bar-B-Q®: After opening their first Woody's Bar-B-Q in 1980, partners Woody Mills and Yolanda Mills-Mawman have spent the past three decades setting the "bar" higher for classic Southern Bar-B-Q. From the humble beginnings of just one location in Jacksonville, Florida, a shared passion for Bar-B-Q, and a dog-eared collection of recipes, Mills and Mawman have grown the Woody's Bar-B-Q brand to locations reaching from the Deep South where Bar-B-Q is king to the Northeast and Western fronts. Perhaps best known for their legendary melt-in-your-mouth slow-smoked Signature Baby Back Ribs, Woody's has also built quite a following among patrons with their secret recipe Bar-B-Q sauces and meats, as well as their freshly prepared comfort food-inspired side dishes. Individuals who wish to learn more about becoming a Woody's Bar-B-Q franchisee are encouraged to visit <http://www.woodys.com/franchise/>.

###