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EL POLLO PUTS THE “LOCO” IN HOUSTON

*Fire-Grilled Chicken Restaurant Chain Celebrates Entry into Houston
with Grand Opening at 4528 Highway 6 South in Sugar Land*

Costa Mesa, Calif. (October 2, 2014) – Yesterday, El Pollo Loco (Nasdaq: LOCO), the nation’s leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant chain, celebrated the grand opening of its first Houston, Texas restaurant - a key expansion market for the chain.

In true Texas fashion, the festivities included a grand opening party, where more than one hundred attendees were invited to sample El Pollo Loco’s signature dishes and tour the restaurant before doors officially open to the public on Monday, October 6. The event also featured remarks by El Pollo Loco CEO Steve Sather, followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony with city officials and community dignitaries.

“As a long-time resident of Sugar Land, I am delighted to have the first Houston-area El Pollo Loco here in our city and offering a new restaurant option to our residents and visitors.” said Sugar Land Councilman, Himesh Gandhi. “I would like to personally thank CEO Steve Sather, and his staff for investing in our community. We are looking forward to El Pollo Loco’s future success and growth in the Houston area.”

“We are excited to introduce Houstonians to El Pollo Loco,” said Carlos Esquivel, Director of Operations, El Pollo Loco. “With multiple restaurants opening in the Houston area over the next several months, we look forward to offering additional employment opportunities to residents and identifying meaningful ways to give back to the community. We have just recently become members of the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce and are pleased to be the title sponsor for the Sugarland Skeeters 2014 playoff run.”

At approximately 2,970 square feet, each El Pollo Loco restaurant will feature a vibrant exterior, colorful, comfortable booths and large windows to allow natural sunlight into the dining area. An exhibition kitchen will showcase the preparation of El Pollo Loco’s signature chicken which will be prepared on an open flame by the restaurant’s Grill Masters. The restaurant is open seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. with drive-thru service and catering also available.

El Pollo Loco will open four additional Houston-area restaurants over the next several months in the following locations:

- Copperfield – Highway 6 & West Rd., opening Fall 2014
- Katy – S. Mason Rd. & Provincial Blvd., opening Winter 2014
- Humble – FM 1960 & Whitaker Rd., opening 2015
- Spring – Kuykendahl & Springbrook Garden Lane, opening 2015

(more)

**Now Hiring!**

El Pollo Loco is actively recruiting for new management and crew level positions to support the Houston-area restaurant locations. The company will be hiring hundreds of full- and part-time crew members over the next several months and each restaurant will employ approximately 40 people. El Pollo Loco offers a range of benefits to eligible crew members. Interested candidates are encouraged to apply at ElPolloLoco.com/Houston.

All crew members begin their on-the-job learning experience with an innovative training system designed to provide them with the tools and skills necessary to master the position. Crew members receive hands-on training for learning all facets of the restaurant: from delivering exceptional guest service and ringing-up orders to fire-grilling El Pollo Loco's citrus-marinated chicken or preparing fresh, authentic salsas.

Growth in the Houston market will be driven through a combination of company, existing and new franchisee development. El Pollo Loco is in a constant pursuit for qualified franchisees who are interested in joining the growing brand. For more information please visit elpolloloco.com/franchising.

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About El Pollo Loco

[El Pollo Loco](http://ElPolloLoco.com) (Nasdaq: LOCO) is the nation's leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant chain renowned for its masterfully citrus-marinated and fire-grilled chicken and handcrafted entrees using fresh ingredients inspired by authentic Mexican recipes. With more than 400 company-owned and franchised restaurants in Arizona, California, Nevada, Texas and Utah, El Pollo Loco will expand its presence in key markets targeting growth of eight to 10 percent per year through a combination of company and existing and new franchisee development. Some say the lengths we go to create fresh, delicious food are crazy. We say it's Crazy You Can Taste. Visit us on our website at ElPolloLoco.com.

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