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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 17, 2022

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## **IFMA Honors SAGE Dining Services® Founders with Silver Plate Award**

LUTHERVILLE, Md. — SAGE Dining Services® Founders, Tina and Paco Rodriguez, have received the 2022 Silver Plate Award from the International Foodservice Manufacturers Association (IFMA), one of the highest honors in the hospitality industry. Since 1954, the IFMA Gold & Silver Plate Awards have honored standout contributions from the nation’s restaurant and food service operators. Previous recipients have included Wolfgang Puck, J. Willard Marriott, and Thomas Keller.

Selection in the business and industry/foodservice management category recognizes SAGE for three-plus decades of leadership in on-campus dining for independent schools and private colleges throughout the U.S. and in Canada. From SAGE’s inception, the Rodriguezes pioneered an inclusive approach to campus dining, focusing on nutrition, allergy management, quality service, financial transparency, and local sourcing.

Wayne Farms, a privately held poultry producer based in Georgia, nominated the Rodriguezes for the IFMA award. “We value the relationship we’ve had with SAGE since 2016,” said Todd Benckini, Wayne Farms regional sales manager. “Tina and Paco have developed sustainable solutions for campus dining and encouraged SAGE Managers to source local ingredients. SAGE has shown how to take an educational and solutions-oriented approach to school food service.”

“We thank IFMA for this incredible honor,” Tina Rodriguez said. “We’re proud of our many partnerships with producers across the U.S. and in Canada, which allow us to provide fresh, local food for our communities.”

The complete 68th Silver Plate class, which includes winners in six other categories, will gather in Chicago May 21 at IFMA’s annual award ceremony to celebrate their accomplishments and learn who earned the Gold Plate Award.

The Rodriguezes previously won the Sarah Dagnault Outstanding Support for Independent Schools Award from the National Business Officers Association in 2021 and an Influential Marylanders award from The Daily Record in 2020.

### **About SAGE Dining Services®**

SAGE Dining Services®, established in 1990, is the leading food service provider for independent schools and colleges throughout North America. SAGE’s unparalleled expertise in nutrition, sustainability, and culinary trends produces exceptional dining experiences that delight the senses, inspire minds, and foster community. Learn more at [SAGEDINING.COM](http://SAGEDINING.COM).