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— MIDDLE EASTERN KITCHEN —

MOHAMAD FAKIH

PRESIDENT & CEO OF PARAMOUNT FINE FOODS



In 2006, Mohamad Fakih, Entrepreneur and Philanthropist, purchased a nearly bankrupt restaurant and transformed it into what is now known as the fastest growing Middle Eastern Halal restaurant chain in North America – Paramount Fine Foods. Mohamad’s determination to change perceptions surrounding Middle Eastern food has driven Paramount’s brand success across Canada and Internationally as well as advancing the global Middle Eastern food trend.

Paramount currently employs over 2000 people across its 71 restaurants and gourmet butcher shops globally with 42 in Canada and 12 International locations, plus food factories and its Toronto international corporate head office. Paramount is proud to bring Halal Foods to the world after being the first halal restaurant to open at Terminals 1 and 3 at Toronto Pearson International Airport.

Mr. Fakih is a strategic and successful business leader who employs his skills, expertise and experience into expanding Paramount’s brand to pioneer the halal market globally. He believes this can only be achieved by sharing his vision, knowledge and expertise with his management teams and franchisees in every country where he opens locations. Mr. Fakih aims to continue the swift growth of Paramount globally while continuing to promote excellent standards of food quality and service in Middle Eastern restaurants and to share the cuisine with diverse audiences.

In 2020, in the midst of the global pandemic, Mr. Fakih launched three new restaurant brands: Box’d, Krispo, and MaseMo Pizza. In 2021, a new partnership with Rabba Fine Foods was announced, adding Paramount Butcher shops and Rabba Kitchens by Paramount inside Rabba Fine Food stores.

A community leader, Mr. Fakih regularly participates in fundraisers and community events, supporting multiple causes and organizations including the Canadian Cancer Society, Islamic Relief worldwide, Sick Kids Hospital, the Make a Wish Foundation in Toronto and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in Canada. Both Paramount and Mohamad have donated generously to these charities and other non-profit organizations. Across his restaurants Mohamad offers discounts to all Emergency Service Workers in uniform to show appreciation for their service in our communities.

In 2016, after the Canadian government decided to welcome 25,000 Syrian Refugees, Mr. Fakih made headlines when he travelled to Lebanon to visit the Islamic Relief Camps for Syrian Refugees to gain a deeper understanding of current relief efforts. Hoping to lead by example, Mohamad partnered with Ryerson University for the Lifeline Syrian Challenge – allowing Paramount Fine Foods to fund employment support counsel to help recruit new Syrian Canadians during their job search.

Mohamad opened the doors of Paramount restaurants to the skills and drive many refugees bring to Canada by providing up to 150 jobs for the newcomers in his restaurants in 2017.

Mr. Fakih’s determination to uphold the values of giving back to communities where Paramount restaurants are located has resulted in a workplace culture of giving to others and supporting one another. He has made



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philanthropy and giving back a key part of Paramount's culture and identity.

Mr. Fakh has been featured in several leading media outlets across Canada including CBC TV and Radio, CTV, Global and CP24, Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, Hamilton Spectator, Newstalk 1010, National Post and many more.

In February 2017, Mr. Fakh was acknowledged in the Canadian Parliament by the Prime Minister of Canada as an Exemplary Canadian Citizen and Businessman who successfully operated a Middle Eastern restaurant chain, and was applauded for his charitable work in January 2017 when he covered the funeral costs of six victims of a mass shooting at a Quebec City mosque. In his business affairs and community work, Mr. Fakh is viewed as a Canadian of Lebanese birth who brings together people of all origins in a global workplace, advancing our communities and helping each other to contribute to our societies. The Prime Minister of Canada, as well as the Premier of Ontario, and several Mayors have all visited Paramount Restaurants in Ontario.

Along with being named a finalist in the 2014 Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award, Mr. Fakh made the cover of Canadian Immigrant Magazine for both his business success and inspiring life story. In addition, The Globe and Mail titled Mr. Fakh one of Toronto's "16 to watch in 2016". The list included other notable Canadians such as John Tory, Mayor of Toronto and Alessia Cara (International Artist). Toronto Life Magazine named Mr. Fakh as one of the Top 50 Most Influential People in 2017, 2019, and 2020 including him in a list of successful politicians, international businessmen, media and tech titans who are changing the world as we know it.

In 2018 Mohamad received an honorary Doctor of Laws Degree from Ryerson University in Toronto. He also received the prestigious 2018 Employer Award for Newcomer Employment from IRCC- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

In May 2018, the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, launched a new partnership with Mr. Fakh, to support the Agency's work for refugees globally and in Canada.

UNHCR recognized Mr. Fakh's vision and commitment to building a Canada that is strengthened by diversity and leads globally on refugee issues, based on his contribution in promoting the economic and social integration of refugees into our communities. For three years, he was the voice and the face of UNHCR Canada.

Mr. Fakh is currently a member of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce COVID-19 Recovery Leadership Council, CEOs brought together to help Canada recover from the health and economic crisis. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of Restaurants Canada, a Director of the Empire Club of Canada, and a member of the Metroland Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

In 2019, after a long legal battle against hate crime, hate speech and Islamophobia, the Ontario Supreme Court awarded Mr. Fakh \$2.5 million dollars in damages for defamation against Kevin J. Johnston. Mr. Fakh continues to support communities who face hate crime and hate speech. He will donate collected money to an anti-hate fund. This legal battle not only creates precedent, it is also the largest defamation award in Canada.

In 2021, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce named Mohamad CEO of the Year, and the Globe and Mail's Report on Business named him Corporate Citizen of the Year.

In the last 5 years, Mr. Fakh has received numerous awards for his business excellence and for his charitable



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works including a few mentioned below:

- **Entrepreneur of the Year** – Food and Beverage Finalist 2013 to 2014 - Ernst & Young, Ontario, Canada
- **Readers' Choice Community Gold Award 2013 and 2014** - Hamilton, Ontario newspapers
- **Top Meat Shop 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016** - Top Choice Media Awards in Toronto, Ontario
- Best Middle Eastern Restaurant and Top Butcher Shop in Mississauga, Ontario - insauga.com
- **Entrepreneur of the Year 2016** – MAX Gala – Muslim Awards for Business
- Excellence in Ontario, Canada
- **Business Person of the Year 2016** - Business Excellence Award - Toronto Board of Trade
- **Regional Company of the Year 2016** - Pinnacle Awards - Kostuch Restaurant and Food Industry Media Canada
- **Excellence in Community Engagement 2016** - Pioneers of Change Awards/ Skills for Change - Toronto
- **Best Middle Eastern Restaurant in Ontario, Canada 2016** - Toronto Life Magazine
- **United Way Recognition of Support Award 2016** - Peel Regional Police in Ontario, Canada
- **Top Choice Award for Paramount Restaurants and Butcher Shop in Ontario, Canada-2017** – Top Choice Media
- **Consumers Choice Award** - Best Mediterranean Restaurant in the Greater Toronto Area - 2017
- **Business Person of the Year 2017** – Brampton, Ontario – Board of Trade
- **Sawa Business Excellence Award** – Year 2017 - Sawa International Group Gala - Quebec, Canada for International Relief Organization Awards
- **Restaurants Canada** - Leadership Award 2017 - Organization for Excellence in Canadian Restaurants.
- **Royal Bank of Canada** - Top 25 Immigrant Award 2017
- **Toronto Life Magazine** - Top 50 Most Influential People Awards - 2016, 2017 and 2019
- **Doctor of Law, Honorary Doctorate Degree** - Ryerson University, Toronto, 2018 **2018 Employer Award for Newcomer Employment** – from IRCC: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- **UNHCR - the UN Refugee Agency in Canada** – 2018 - New partnership with Dr. Fakhri, President and CEO of Paramount Fine Foods and Founder of the Fakhri Foundation
- **Recipient of the Senate 150 Medal 2018** – Given to individuals across Canada who has been nominated by senators to mark the 150th anniversary of the first sitting of the Senate
- **University of West Indies, Raymond Chang Award 2019** – Given to individuals who exemplify leadership and philanthropy in commitment to betterment of communities in Canada.
- **VOSCARS, Hazel McCallion Power of Giving Award, 2019** – Given to individuals with generosity and determination who has made a variety of contributions to the community.
- **Ontario Supreme Court** – Dr. Fakhri awarded \$2.5 million dollars against Kevin J. Johnston in defamation court case
- **Business Person of the Year Award, 2019** – Won the prestigious Business Award of Excellence 2019, by



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the Mississauga Board of Trade.

- **Key to the City of Mississauga, 2019** - Awarded the key to the city of Mississauga by Mayor Bonnie Crombie, bestowed upon esteemed community members, former residents and visitors whom the Mayor wishes to honour.
- **Canada's Most Admired CEO 2019, Mid market category** – Recognized as a national winner for fostering high performance corporate cultures that help sustain a competitive advantage.
- **Member of National Speakers Bureau**
- **Corporate Citizen of the Year 2021**
- **Order of Canada – Year 2022**