

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**WASHINGTON DESIGN CENTER HOSTS 8TH ANNUAL CAPITAL COOKS!
Washington DC Culinary Event to Benefit DC Habitat for Humanity**

WASHINGTON, DC (April 9, 2007) – Capital Cooks!, a culinary event presented by The Washington Design Center Kitchen and Bath showrooms and *HOME & DESIGN* magazine, features some of the Washington DC area's hottest chefs and restaurants serving up their signature hors d'oeuvres in the Design Center's luxury kitchen and bath showrooms. The 8th annual Capital Cooks! takes place on Wednesday, May 2 from 6 – 8 p.m. and benefits DC Habitat for Humanity.

"Capital Cooks! is an opportunity for the public to enjoy The Washington Design Center's incredible collection of kitchen and bath showrooms while sampling delicacies from the area's finest chefs," said Ed Collins, general manager of the Washington Design Center. "Capital Cooks! brings together fine food, wine and design to benefit a great local cause, Habitat for Humanity."

This year, Capital Cooks! features a celebrity chef, Walter Scheib, former White House executive chef that served both Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Scheib will share personal stories from his experience cooking for two Presidents, their families and many of the world's dignitaries while whipping up a signature dish of his own. Copies of Scheib's new book *White House Chef: Eleven Years, Two Presidents, One Kitchen* also will be available at the event.

Additionally, these eleven DC restaurants will serve up their favorite menu items to compliment the evening:

- 1789 Restaurant
- Bebo Trattoria
- Charlie Palmer Steak
- Dish
- Dupont Grille
- Galileo
- Michel Richard Citronelle
- PS 7's
- Perry's Restaurant
- Viridian
- Willos

Chefs from these eleven top DC restaurants will prepare their signature dishes inside the lavish kitchen, bath and building products showrooms of The Washington Design Center on the Concourse level. The public is invited sample the creations, sip specialty drinks and enjoy music and entertainment while touring the showrooms.

This year's Capital Cooks! benefits DC Habitat for Humanity, a charity dedicated to eliminating poverty housing and homelessness in the nation's Capital by building affordable energy and resource efficient homes for those in need. A percentage of ticket sales and 100 percent of silent auction proceeds will be donated to the charity. A special "Chef Services Package" from Walter Scheib will be one of the many luxury items available at the silent auction, along with many home furnishings products, restaurant gift certificates and other extravagant treats.

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Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$55 per person or \$60 at the door. Tickets are available online at www.dcdesigncenter.com/capitalcooks.

For more information on the Washington Design Center or Capital Cooks! please call Nicole Frye at 202.646.6114. For more information on DC Habitat for Humanity, or to purchase tickets by phone, please call Lisa Block of DC Habitat for Humanity at 202.822.4600 ext. 226.

About The Washington Design Center:

The Washington Design Center is the mid-Atlantic's premier resource for home furnishings, décor and building products. The home furnishing showrooms cater to interior designers, architects, and space planners for custom design for their clients. Consumers may window shop and browse a select number of residential showrooms, but must work with a design professional in order to purchase any home furnishings, accessories and fabrics from those residential showrooms. However, consumers may shop direct from any of the Kitchen, Bath & Building Design Center showrooms on the Concourse level.

The Washington Design Center is located at 300 D Street, SW in Washington, D.C. Above the Federal Center SW Metro Station, The Washington Design Center is served by the Orange and Blue lines.

Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc. (MMPI) is a trade show and property management firm, specializing in managing buildings devoted to wholesale showrooms and commercial office space. MMPI produces more than 300 trade shows, market events and conferences each year.

MMPI manages The Merchandise Mart and 350 West Mart Center in Chicago; Market Square, the Suites at Market Square, Hamilton Market, Plaza Suites, Furniture Plaza and the National Furniture Mart in High Point, N.C.; the Architects & Designers Building and 7 W New York in New York; the Boston Design Center in Boston; the L.A. Mart in Los Angeles; and The Washington Design Center

Vornado Realty Trust, owners of MMPI, based in New York City, is a fully integrated equity real estate investment trust. Vornado's common shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange and are traded under the symbol VNO.

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