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Grand Opening of BISTRO TO GO New Culinary Team Taps Growing Food Market

(PITTSBURGH) September 25, 2007 — Given the fast and crowded pace of American lives today, the prepared meals-to-go market is burgeoning across the nation and in Pittsburgh. On October 9th, *Bistro To Go* opens its doors in Deutschtown on the Northside to serve this growing market and compete—on a neighborhood level—with Whole Foods and Giant Eagle in this market niche.

Grand Opening Celebration Friday, October 5th 5-8 p.m.

Bistro To Go's new team of several experienced culinary professionals, headed by owner Nikki Heckman, will offer a tasty variety of meals and sides from a menu that changes daily and seasonally. The team will also offer extensive catering services and a variety of cooking classes.

Expect a sampling of cross cultural cuisines made daily from the freshest ingredients. *Bistro* meals-to-go can not only be taken out to home or office, but also eaten on the premises, which has cozy seating for 30 inside and for 20 in a new garden courtyard outside.

Bistro entrepreneur Nikki Heckman brings not only a 28-year career experience in restaurants and the food industry, but also a deep commitment to enhance the East Ohio district with a business that “builds community.” She says “Having lived for 8 years in Manchester and worked for 15 years at the nearby Alliance Church, I care deeply about East Ohio Street’s challenges and its future. I believe that great food, fun, community spirit and Christian values will not only support our business, but also strengthen our community.”

While Mrs. Heckman has startup support from a wide community of people, two key team members in the business venture are Joe Grondziowski, most recently from a management position at *Eat’n Park*, and Chef Alfredo, bringing a Caribbean and New Orleans flavor. *Bistro To Go* will also enter into a ‘sister’ restaurant relationship with the new *Cafe Chevalo* in Granada, Nicaragua, operated by Northside expat Donna Tabor.

This new business at 415 East Ohio Street will operate in a warmly renovated 1888 building with many historic architectural details inside and out (and a recent history of being a Chinese restaurant). It’s a space that owners Nikki and Stan Heckman fell in love with the moment she saw it in April, even in the guise of Ace Athletic.

Mrs. Heckman’s dream is much like the one that friends Ed and Mary Ann Graf expressed in 2004 when they opened *Priory Fine Pastries* just up the street from the *Bistro* location.

The Hollander Building, home to *Bistro To Go*, is one of a series of adjacent buildings that developer Morgan Kronk is renovating into first floor commercial space and upper story condo units.

Major financing for *Bistro To Go* was provided by National City and the Northside Community Development Fund.

