

Gov. Pritzker Celebrates Opening of Eli's Cheesecake's Expanded Facility

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CHICAGO – Governor JB Pritzker joined local and state leaders today to celebrate the ribbon cutting of Eli's Cheesecake expanded facility. The \$10 million investment and 42,000 square-foot expanded facility will increase space for packaging lines and bakery

operations for the famous Chicago cheesecake company while creating 50 new jobs for the area.

“A family-owned bakery — three generations strong, Eli’s Cheesecake is an iconic Chicago-staple,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Thanks to a \$10 million investment and competitive hiring incentives from our EDGE tax credit program, Eli’s Cheesecake was able to complete a 42,000 square foot expansion—bringing this facility size to a whopping 104,000 square feet. And, of course, more capacity brings jobs for the people of Illinois. More jobs, more customers, more cake: it doesn’t get much better than that.”

“With more than three decades of serving communities, the expansion of Eli’s Cheesecake is an example of how Illinois continues to grow,” **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “We have the talent, the business and the infrastructure to keep our communities moving forward.”

The expanded facility – which is the company’s first expansion in almost 30 years – almost doubles the size of its bakery, allowing for increased bakery operations, including additional production and packaging lines, warehousing, and welfare areas. With a total of 104,000-square-feet, the expanded facility includes Eli’s Corporate Offices and the Eli’s Cheesecake Bakery Café, which is open to the public.

“My Dad, Eli M. Schulman, started in the restaurant business in Chicago in 1940, and every night of his career, he wore a lapel pin that said ‘Chicago...we're glad you're here,’” **said Marc Schulman, President, Eli’s Cheesecake**. “Four decades later, he decided that cheesecake would be the signature dessert at his legendary restaurant, Eli’s the Place for Steak. It was there that he dreamed up Chicago style cheesecake and debuted it at the first Taste of Chicago. Today we are one of the largest specialty cheesecake and dessert companies in the country. The ability to find a talented workforce, educational partners and access to transportation make Illinois a great place to do business. We attribute our success to following my Dad's pearls of wisdom: ‘Charity will never bust you’ and, ‘Treat others as if you were the other.’ We are delighted to have this additional space to expand our dessert selection and create more jobs here in the city and state we love.”

“Eli’s Cheesecake is an iconic Illinois brand known across the globe and the state is proud to support their expansion,” **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. “Eli’s expansion is a prime example of Illinois’ thriving food production industry and commitment to partnering with local institutions to grow and train our workforce.”

Eli’s Cheesecake’s decision to expand their operations builds upon Illinois’ global reputation as a leader in the food processing industry. From UPSIDE foods first commercial-scale cultivated meat production plant in Glenview, to Saline River Farms’

new state-of-the-art USDA meat processing facility, and Ferrero's Bloomington expansion and first North American R&D lab, Illinois continues to expand its reach in the food production and confection industry.

Eli's Cheesecake is also partnering with Wright College, who received a Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) Grant through DCEO. Through the partnership, Eli's provides opportunities for students with disabilities from the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences and Vaughn Occupational High School to work at Eli's Cheesecake – providing high-needs students with critical skills to support economic independence.

As part of the expansion, the company received an Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) tax credit.