

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 9, 2025**

### **Raldex Hospitality Hosts 13th First Responders Cookout Luncheon in Florence**

*Florence, SC* – Raldex Hospitality, a locally owned hotel management company operating five hotels in Florence, proudly hosted its 13th First Responders Cookout Luncheon on Wednesday, April 9, 2025. The event, held at the Raldex corporate office, welcomed hundreds of first responders from across Florence for a complimentary lunch to honor their dedication and service to the community.

First responders from various departments—including Fire, EMS, City Police, Sheriff’s Office, Dispatch, SLED, South Carolina Highway Patrol, and DNR—were invited to enjoy a meal, network with one another, and take plates back to colleagues unable to leave their posts. Parking for the event was provided by the Florence Center, and the luncheon was supported by Raldex staff, including hotel General Managers and employees who volunteered their time to serve the guests.

“This is our way of saying thank you,” said Chad Patterson, CEO and President of Raldex Hospitality. “We try to host this cookout twice a year, and it’s always an honor to feed the people who take care of us every day. They protect our city, they respond to emergencies, and they support our hotels. The least we can do is serve them a great lunch and show our appreciation.”

Flavor Town Eats & Events, operated by Raldex’s own Kirby Anderson, catered the event with a Southern-inspired menu featuring BBQ, mac and cheese, cowboy beans, slaw, green beans, and banana pudding. Donald Gerrald provided chicken bog as well.

“Our first event started with about 50 people, and now we’re feeding nearly 300,” said Anderson, who serves as Corporate Sales & Promotions for Raldex. “Giving back is at the heart of what Raldex is all about, and this partnership allows us to support first responders in a meaningful way.”

Chief Allen Heidler, Director of the Florence Police Department since 2014, emphasized the importance of the gesture. “This is a huge morale booster for our officers. They don’t get recognized often, and having a company like Raldex step up year after year really makes a difference. And the food—especially that traditional South Carolina barbecue—never disappoints.”

In attendance were General Managers from each of the Raldex hotels, Hilton Garden Inn, Hampton Inn & Suites, Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Hampton Inn & Suites–North, and Staybridge Suites, all of whom served alongside other staff members to support the event. Their participation reflects the company’s commitment to service and community connection—values long held by Raldex Hospitality.