



## El Pollo Loco® Partners with WNBA Star Arike Ogunbowale to Support School Sports Teams Nationwide

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**“Bring the Fire” contest, through the El Pollo Loco Foundation, will award a total of \$10,000 worth of new equipment to five sports teams to help build and sustain youth athletics**

COSTA MESA, Calif., Jan. 20, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [El Pollo Loco](#), the nation’s leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant chain, is teaming up with women’s basketball superstar Arike Ogunbowale to support school sports teams across the country through its Foundation’s “Bring the Fire” contest, an initiative designed to uplift young athletes and provide much-needed equipment to school programs.

Through the contest, funded by the El Pollo Loco Foundation, five school sports teams will each receive \$2,000 toward helping the team refresh their gear, equipment and/or facilities to continue building strong athletic programs. The contest is now live nationwide and runs through February 19, 2026, with winners announced mid-March 2026 on El Pollo Loco’s Instagram.

“School sports are such a powerful source of confidence and community for young athletes, but not every school has the resources to replace equipment or maintain facilities — and that shouldn’t be a barrier to participation or success,” said Arike Ogunbowale. “I’m proud to partner with El Pollo Loco and the El Pollo Loco Foundation to help remove those barriers so student athletes can focus on having fun, building confidence, teamwork, and a love for the game.”

The initiative builds on a recent visit by Arike and El Pollo Loco to Lancaster High School in Texas, where they surprised the girls’ basketball team with a special appearance. During the visit, Arike played a spirited game of P-O-L-L-O (a twist on H-O-R-S-E) and presented a \$10,000 donation on behalf of El Pollo Loco Foundation to support the school’s girls basketball program. The excitement from the visit sparked the idea of El Pollo Loco’s “Bring the Fire” contest, allowing the brand and foundation to support even more school sports teams nationwide.

“Thanks to the El Pollo Loco Foundation, supporting the communities we serve goes beyond our restaurants,” said Jill Adams, Chief Marketing Officer at El Pollo Loco. “Partnering with Arike, whose leadership and passion for uplifting underserved youth is evident in everything she does, is a true embodiment of what we aim to achieve in our communities. Her commitment to her community aligns perfectly with our foundation’s mission to support the youth in the communities we serve.”

How to Enter the ‘Bring the Fire’ Contest:

- Record a video about what school sports team you’re nominating, why you think the team deserves to win and what they would spend the prize money on
- Post that video on Instagram and be sure to tag #EPLfire and #Contest in the caption
- Follow both @elpollo loco and @arike\_ogunbowale for updates about the contest

Visit [ElPolloLoco.com/BringtheFire](https://ElPolloLoco.com/BringtheFire) for official details and Terms & Conditions.

### About El Pollo Loco

El Pollo Loco (Nasdaq: LOCO) is the nation’s leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant known for its craveable, flavorful, and better-for-you offerings. Named by USA Today 10 Best Reader’s Choice Awards as a “Best Restaurant for Quick, Healthy Food” two years in a row, our menu features innovative meals with Mexican-inspired flavors made daily in our restaurants using quality ingredients. At [El Pollo Loco](#), inclusivity is at the heart of our culture. Our community of over 4,000 employees reflects our commitment to creating a workplace where everyone has a seat at our table. Since 1980, El Pollo Loco has successfully expanded its presence, operating more than 500 company-owned and franchised restaurants across nine U.S. states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, and Washington. The company has also extended its footprint internationally, with licensed restaurant locations in the Philippines. For more information or to place an [order](#), visit the Loco Rewards [app](#) or [ElPolloLoco.com](https://ElPolloLoco.com). Follow us on [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [Facebook](#), or [X](#).

### About El Pollo Loco Foundation

El Pollo Loco Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity that aims to provide food and other necessities for those in financial need.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/0e22b161-9397-4746-bbb1-54d61a829fdf>



**EL POLLO LOCO® PARTNERS WITH WNBA STAR ARIKE OGUNBOWALE TO SUPPORT SCHOOL SPORTS TEAMS NATIONWIDE**



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Source: El Pollo Loco Holdings, Inc.