



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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**Opus, Weber Shandwick, Jeane Thorne Inc.
named as Keystone's Honored Companies**

(Minneapolis, November 17, 2004) The Minnesota Keystone Program has named Opus Northwest, Weber Shandwick Worldwide, and Jeane Thorne Inc., as this year's Honored Company Award winners. Chosen from among the 248 companies being honored by the Keystone program for their community giving, these companies are being singled out for their generous commitment to the Twin Cities community.

The Minnesota Keystone Program was launched by the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce in 1976 to recognize companies that are enhancing the quality of life in our state through corporate philanthropy. This year, the program salutes 248 companies from throughout the state for giving 2 percent or more of their pre-tax net earnings to address community needs.

The Star Award is presented annually to one small company that exemplifies the spirit of the program and is considered a small business. The focus of Jeane Thorne Inc.'s giving efforts has been not only to contribute monetarily to community needs, but also to include a component that encourages a growth of momentum – a “pay-it-forward” philosophy. For example, the minority student scholarships at St. Thomas University, and scholarships awarded at Minnesota State University – Mankato, require that the recipient meet some specific community service time commitment. It is this commitment to spreading the “spirit of giving” that resulted in Jeane Thorne Inc. being selected at the Star Award Winner for 2004.

The 2004 Shining Star Award is presented to Weber Shandwick Worldwide as a mid-size company. Weber Shandwick, whose program is called “Making a Difference,” underscores an element of their corporate culture. They strongly believe and put into practice the importance of making a difference in our local community. During 2003 Weber Shandwick provided pro bono support to nearly 40 Minnesota nonprofits, supplying in-depth pro bono support teams to two nonprofit organizations that met their set criteria: youth development, crisis intervention, prevention services, diversity and educational programs.

Opus Northwest, one of the founding participants of the Minnesota Keystone Program, will receive the 2004 Super Star Award. For the past 50 years Opus has been giving back to the community and they marked this impressive milestone by providing financial support to St. Joseph's Home for Children in order to make it a safe and comforting environment for children. Opus' plan included upgrading the shelter units and related service areas so that children had the feeling of being in a home, rather than an institution. Over 200 Opus volunteers provided more than 600 volunteer hours and helped demolish, clean, paint and install new furniture in each of the rooms.

"Every Keystone participant, and our honored companies in particular, are admirable by any measure," said Todd Klingel, president and CEO of the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce. "The fact that they have maintained their giving at a fixed percent though periods of tremendous change, growth and profitability demonstrates their unwavering commitment to our community."

Each company will accept their Honored Company Award at the Minnesota Keystone Program's Annual Recognition Luncheon on Wednesday, Dec.15, 11:30 a.m. at the Minneapolis Marriott. The event also will recognize Keystone's 248 participating companies, and 14 founding companies who remain active in the program. BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota, The Business Journal, Target, and Wells Fargo are sponsors of the event. For more information about the luncheon, please call 612.370.9100, or click on "upcoming programs" at www.minneapolischamber.org

The Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce represents 985 member businesses in 68 Twin Cities' metro communities and provides local focus through the Bloomington Chamber and the City of Lakes Chamber. Its mission is to unite the region's business community and to engage dynamic business and civic leadership in the development and advancement of a world class, competitive economic environment.

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