FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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(Governor to Recognize Five Iowa Companies for Performance Excellence)

Cedar Rapids—The Executive Council of the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence
(IRPE), the Office of the Governor, and the Iowa Quality Center are proud to announce that The
HON Company, Oak Steel Plant and The HON Company, Geneva Plant (operating companies of
HNI Corporation), Muscatine; Eastern Iowa Community College District, Davenport; John Deere
Credit, Johnston; Facilities Planning and Management, Iowa State University, Ames have
received Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence awards for 2004.

Governor Thomas J. Vilsack will present the awards at the annual Governor’s Recognition of
Performance Excellence Celebration in the Holiday Inn University Park, West Des Moines,
Tuesday, March 1, 2005 at 6:00 p.m.

The prestigious Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence awards were established five years
ago to recognize those businesses and organizations in the state who have completed a
strenuous review and evaluation of their leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, analysis
of information, human resource focus, process management and business results.  The process
is aligned with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, and the Baldrige Criteria are used
for the assessment.

The HON Company, Oak Steel Plant and John Deere Credit will be recognized at the Silver level
and Eastern Iowa Community College District; The HON Company, Geneva Plant; and Facilities
Planning and Management – Iowa State University will be recognized at the Bronze level.  In the
past four years, there have been 32 applications for the performance excellence awards, and 13
have been recognized for their achievement, three at the silver level and 10 at the bronze level.

There is no monetary award, but those who complete the process say it helps them identify
strengths and weaknesses within their companies, provides training for continuous improvement
and leadership development, and assures customer focus and efficiency within their operations.
This process is a proven method for organizations to achieve their highest potential and become
more competitive in the world marketplace. For this reason the process is used by more than 40
states to support their economic development efforts.

Companies and organizations that complete the Iowa process are also better positioned to
prepare for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.
Other organizations that completed various levels of the Iowa performance recognition process include Muscatine High School, and Veterans Memorial Hospital in Waukon. These organizations will be recognized for their commitment to performance excellence.

The IRPE process, awards and examiner training are coordinated by the Iowa Quality Center, based in Marion, Iowa. Applications to begin the process are open to organizations involved in business and manufacturing, education, government, human services, non-profit or health care.

For more information about the IRPE process and the March 1st celebration, contact Gary Nesteby at the Iowa Quality Center, (319) 398-7101 or visit the IQC website at www.iowaqc.org.

For more information and reactions from The HON Company, contact Dale Lucht, (563) 264-7442.

For more information and reactions from John Deere Credit, contact Steve Guns, (515)267-4791.

For more information and reactions from Eastern Iowa Community College District., contact Honey Bedell, (563) 336-3300.

For more information and reactions from Facilities Planning and Management, Iowa State University, contact Christopher (Chris) Ahoy, (515)294-8079.