

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Governor to Recognize Iowa Companies for Performance Excellence)

Cedar Rapids The Executive Council of the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence (IRPE), Governor Tom Vilsack, and the Iowa Quality Center are proud to announce that **John Deere Credit**, Johnston; **The HON Company – Oak Steel Plant**, Muscatine; **Facilities Planning and Management, Iowa State University**, Ames; **Great River Medical Center**, West Burlington, IA; **St Luke's Hospital**, Cedar Rapids; **Cedar Rapids Community School District**; **Eaton Corporation**, Shenandoah; and **Hearth & Home Technologies**, Mt Pleasant have received Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence awards for 2006.

Governor Chester Culver has been invited to present the awards at the annual Governor's Recognition of Performance Excellence Celebration at the Hy-Vee Conference Center in West Des Moines Thursday, February 22, 2007 at 6:00 p.m.

The prestigious Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence awards were established seven 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, measurement, analysis, and knowledge management, human resource focus, process management and results. The process is aligned with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, and the Criteria for Performance Excellence are used for the assessment.

John Deere Credit will be recognized at the Gold Achievement level; **Facilities Planning and Management at Iowa State University; Great River Medical Center; The HON Company - Oak Steel Plant;** and **St Luke's Hospital** will be recognized at the Silver Achievement level and **Cedar Rapids Community School District; Eaton Corporation;** and **Hearth & Home Technologies** will be recognized at the Bronze Achievement level. In the past seven years, there have been 53 applications for the performance excellence awards, and 25 have been recognized for their achievement, one at the gold level, nine at the silver level and 15 at the bronze level.

There is no monetary award, but those who complete the process indicate it helps them identify strengths and opportunities for improvement 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 39 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 **Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center**, Davenport; and **The National Weather Service – Weather Forecast Office**, Davenport. 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 February 22nd 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 John Deere Credit, contact Steve Guns, (515)267-4791.

For more information and reactions from The HON Company, contact Dale Lucht, (563) 272-7442.

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

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