



Ernst & Young LLP
1200 Main Street
One Kansas City Place
Kansas City, MO 64105

News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Wendy Fox

Ernst & Young LLP

612-371-6703

wendy.fox@ey.com

**Finalists for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year[®] Award
Announced in Central Midwest Program**

- Award Recipients Named at Gala Event on June 22 -

Kansas City, MO, April 25, 2006 – Ernst & Young LLP today announced the finalists for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year[®] 2006 Award in the Central Midwest region. This year's 18 finalists were selected by an independent judging panel composed of area business, academic and civic leaders. Award recipients will be announced at a special 20th anniversary gala event on Thursday, June 22, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center.

“This year's finalists are true visionaries who have contributed to economic growth, innovation, and cutting-edge products and services,” said Randy Buseman, Partner and leader of Ernst & Young's Strategic Growth Markets practice. “We proudly celebrate their achievements as we mark the 20th anniversary of this prestigious awards program.”

The Central Midwest finalists for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year 2006 Award are:

- Scott Lynn, CEO, AdKnowledge, Inc.
- Ronald Miller, President and CEO, Aventine Renewable Energy Holdings, Inc.
- Michael Ducey, President and CEO, Compass Minerals International
- Jim Danbom, Chairman of the Board, Cycle Country Accessories
- Victor Richey, Chairman and CEO, ESCO Technologies Inc.
- Mike Shojaat, President and Carolyn Shojaat, Vice President of Finance, Global Tech Services, Inc. and Global Aviation Resources, Inc.

- more -

- Robert Hartnett, CEO, Houlihan's Restaurants, Inc.
- Richie Graham, President, Impressions Direct, Inc.
- Mark Reighard, CEO, Integrated Chemical Management Solutions dba AvChem
- John Hammons, Chairman, CEO and Founder, John Q. Hammons
Hotels & Resorts, LLC
- Jim Masterson, Chairman and CEO, LightEdge Solutions
- Adam Bold, Founder, The Mutual Fund Store, Inc.
- Scott Coons, President and CEO, Perceptive Software, Inc.
- Bill Sullivan, Chairman and Tom Holcom, President, Pioneer Financial Services
- Keith Jacob, President, St. Louis Staffing
- Clifton Cohn, President and CEO, The Yarco Companies

The Central Midwest award recipients will be eligible for consideration for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year 2006 national program. Winners in several national categories, as well as the overall national Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year award winner, will be announced at the annual awards gala in Palm Springs, California on November 18, 2006.

The Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards program celebrates its 20th anniversary this year and continues to recognize the leaders and visionaries who are creating and building world-class businesses. Awards are given to entrepreneurs who have demonstrated excellence and extraordinary success in such areas as innovation, financial performance, and personal commitment to their businesses and communities.

Sponsors

Founded and produced by Ernst & Young LLP, the Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards is nationally sponsored by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. In the Central Midwest program, local sponsors include Lockton Companies, Inc. and *The Des Moines Business Record*.

Contact Information

To make reservations for the awards event on June 22, 2006, contact Marilee Albers of Ernst & Young at 314-290-1970 or marilee.albers@ey.com by May 30. Tickets are \$125 per person. For more information about the awards program, visit www.ey.com/us/eoy.

About the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards

The Entrepreneur Of The Year® awards program was created and is produced by professional services firm Ernst & Young LLP. As the first award of its kind, the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® Award recognizes outstanding entrepreneurs who are building and leading dynamic and growing businesses. The program honors entrepreneurs through regional, national and global award programs in over 100 cities and 35 countries.

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Note to Editors: Media are invited to attend the awards event for interview and photo opportunities. Please call Wendy Fox at 612-371-6703 as soon as possible to request a complimentary reservation. Press credentials must be presented.