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The GMSDC Announces the 2015 Spirit of Alliance Award Winners

AT&T takes Top Honors at 40th Anniversary Celebration

ATLANTA (October 23, 2015) – The Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council (GMSDC) recognized supplier diversity champions at the 33rd Spirit of Alliance Awards, held on October 3rd at 200 Peachtree. The GMSDC celebrated 40 years of excellence in supplier diversity and small business development by honoring top achievers in supplier diversity. A special 40th Anniversary Presidents Award was presented to the five corporations whose vision helped launch the GMSDC in 1975 – AT&T, The Coca-Cola Company, Cox Communications, Delta Air Lines and Georgia Power. The Spirit of Alliance gala honors the corporations, Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) and supplier diversity advocates that are setting the standard for small business development and creating opportunities for minority-owned businesses in Georgia. The theme for the 2015 celebration is *Realizing Tomorrow*, as the GMSDC seeks to make available to its constituents all of the resources they need to achieve their business goals.

AT&T was selected for both the Corporation of The Year award, given to the top corporate partner in the GMSDC community, and the Crystal Award, presented by the small businesses in the Council to the corporation they rate the most committed to supplier diversity. Both of these awards weigh a company's small business development programs, its level of engagement with diverse vendors, and its overall commitment to the GMSDC's mission to create opportunities for minority small business. Others receiving awards included Executive of the Year Paul Bowers of Georgia Power, Advocate of the Year Todd Gray of the Grady Health System, and the JE Dunn, the recipient of the George Lottier Rising Star Award.

The top individual honor at the Spirit of Alliance Awards is the Blue Legend Award, which recognizes trailblazers for a lifetime of service and commitment to supplier diversity. Andrew Young, the Chair of the Andrew J. Young foundation, and the late Rosemary Jones, the longtime Director of Supplier Diversity at Turner Broadcasting, have both demonstrated the persistent and unwavering commitment to diversity and equal opportunity that this award stands for. Throughout their careers, they cleared the way for others and provided countless opportunities for small business in Georgia to thrive. They join a distinguished group of past Blue Legend winners that includes Herman J. Russell, Mayor Maynard Jackson, Senator Sam Nunn and Congressman John Lewis.

The awards also recognized the top achievers among the more than 700 certified MBE firms in the GMSDC community. Supplier of the Year Awards were presented in four revenue categories – ranging from under \$1 million annually to over \$50 million - to SquarePac (Class I), ProCutters Lawnsapes (Class II), VDart, Inc. (Class III) and PS



Energy (Class IV). The Eagle Award, recognizing the MBE firm that shows the greatest commitment to doing business with other MBE firms, went to two firms this year – Ark Temporary Staffing, and Systel, Inc. who was just named National Supplier of the Year at the NMSDC National Conference and Business Opportunity Fair.

“We are so proud of our entire Council, both the corporations and the MBEs, for all of their many accomplishments,” said GMSDC President and CEO Stacey Key. “The Spirit of Alliance Awards lets everyone see what we already know – there is no finer business community anywhere than we have right here in Georgia. I am excited about what the next forty years will bring.” For more information and a detailed list of honorees, visit gmsdc.org.

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