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Press Release

WorkForce Essentials to Receive Achievement Award

The TENNESSEE CENTER FOR PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE (TNCPE) announced Workforce Essentials, Inc. of Clarksville, Tennessee is a winner of the 2003 Achievement Award. Awards will be presented at the 11th annual Awards Banquet on February 23, 2004, at the Nashville Renaissance Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. Workforce Essentials, Inc. is a private, non-profit corporation providing innovative employment programs and training solutions to businesses and opportunities for job seekers through its centers in nine Tennessee counties and at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Achievement Level recognition is provided to Tennessee organizations that have demonstrated, through their commitment and practice of quality principles, significant progress in building sound and notable processes. Organizations recognized at this advanced level clearly demonstrate results directly attributable to a systematic, well-deployed approach. These organizations have many practices from which other organizations can learn.

The CENTER, through its annual Award Process, recognizes organizations that have demonstrated through their practices and achievements the highest standards of excellence. The program utilizes the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* established by the Baldrige National Quality Program as the evaluation and education tool. Awards are presented on a multi-level basis with organizations receiving recognition in one of four categories: Quality Interest – the beginning level, Commitment Award, Achievement Award, and the highest level – the Excellence Award.

Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen said, "It is an honor for me to recognize and to offer my congratulations to all of these great Tennessee companies who have demonstrated a commitment to excellence. The employees of each of these organizations are to be commended for having set and met the highest possible standards for quality performance that reflect proudly on our state."

Twenty-three organizations will be recognized at the Quality Interest level; fifteen are being recognized with the Commitment Award and eight will be honored at the advanced level with the Achievement award. For 2003, an Excellence Award is not being bestowed.

TN Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, James Neeley added, "I am proud of the staff at Workforce Essentials. Their commitment to quality customer service is setting the standard for our Tennessee Career Centers across the state. This high level of excellence shows me their teamwork and dedication to high standards has paid off."

More than 950 organizations have progressed through one or more levels of achievement that lead to the coveted Excellence Award. The CENTER's multiple levels provide a pathway to business excellence. A board of examiners comprised of more than 150 experts in business, education, healthcare, and government assess applicants on seven criteria. The criteria are leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, measurement, analysis and knowledge management, human resource focus, process management and business results.

Bob Gaydos, Clarksville Plant Manager at The Trane Company and North TN Workforce Board member stated, "Manufacturers as an industry, recognize the importance of quality. Our Trane and American Standard brands are known for exceptional reliability and we know the effort and focus required to sustain quality while looking for ways to continually

get better. Trane commends WorkForce Essentials for recognizing the importance of implementing quality processes and procedures; for committing to quality initiatives; and for earning state-wide recognition as a top notch quality organization. Congratulations."

The Tennessee program, itself a national and international role model, is open to all business as well as public and private education institutions, health care organizations, government agencies and other non-profit entities. TNCPE is a public-private partnership. Serving as chair of the 2003 Board of Directors is Dr. Michael Browder, General Manager, Bristol Tennessee Electric System.

North Tennessee Workforce Board (NTWB) is a state certified organization, which operates as the local workforce investment board for the area encompassing Cheatham, Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery, Robertson, Stewart, Sumner, and Williamson counties in Tennessee and at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.