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CISCO SYSTEMS, GRAND CIRCLE, AND KABOOM! WIN CECP AWARDS HONORING “EXCELLENCE IN CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY”

*John Chambers, Alan Lewis, and Darell Hammond with Bob Nardelli
Receive CECP Awards on National Corporate Philanthropy Day*

NEW YORK, February 27, 2006 – Honoring CEO leadership, dedication to measurement, innovation and partnership in corporate philanthropy, the **Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy (CECP)** is celebrating the recipients of its Excellence Awards today, on National Corporate Philanthropy Day. These awards recognize innovative philanthropic programs that inspire employees to donate over 200,000 hours of community service in seven months (**Cisco**), fund almost 100 schools or youth programs around the world (**Grand Circle**), and build and restore playspaces via a nonprofit and corporate partnership (**KaBOOM!** nominated by **The Home Depot**).

Since 2000, CECP's Excellence in Corporate Philanthropy Awards have been presented annually to companies such as GE, Novartis, Pfizer, Target, IBM, Merck, Arch Chemicals, Hasbro, Whole Foods Market and Timberland. The 2005 Excellence Awards Jury Selection Committee is composed of distinguished experts from the corporate, nonprofit, media, and academic communities.

“The common thread of this year’s award-winning applicants is CEO leadership,” said Charles Moore, Executive Director of CECP. “Employees at our winning companies, both corporate and non-profit, have responded to the philanthropic mandate of their CEOs, who present an innovative vision of social awareness aligned with corporate America’s business needs and objectives.”

Cisco has developed a number of innovative philanthropic programs, which, in addition to its employee volunteer campaign, include a \$40 million commitment to its “21S” education initiative to aid in post-Hurricane Katrina rebuilding, and a global “Leadership Fellows Program” that allows employees to work full-time for nonprofits for up to one year, at no cost to the nonprofits. Cisco’s CEO John Chambers has shown extensive leadership by joining employees in volunteer events and personally donating \$2 million out of Cisco’s \$40 million contribution to the 21st Century Schools project.

“It is an honor to be recognized for the collective efforts and contribution of our employees. Giving back to the global community is at the foundation of our culture,” said **John Chambers, President and CEO of Cisco Systems, Inc.** “We believe it is our responsibility to use our resources and expertise to make an impact in the communities in which we live and work.”

Grand Circle Corporation, the leader in international travel, adventure, and discovery for Americans 50-plus ties social goals directly to its fast-growing business. The Foundation is funded through corporate profits, and incorporates philanthropic opportunities into the company's travel services. One primary Grand Circle program is the "World Classroom Initiative", a 5-year, \$10 million program to invest in international communities where Grand Circle brings travelers. To date, the Grand Circle Foundation has funded 87 school or youth-related programs around the world. **Chairman and CEO Alan Lewis** is extensively committed to corporate philanthropy, and has created a Company Report Card to measure employee opinions on the effectiveness of the company's social responsibility.

"Corporate leaders must place philanthropy in the soul of their business," states **Grand Circle's Alan Lewis**. "We know our business benefits from our giving back by attracting and keeping the best employees and customers. Most important, we can make a difference and help change people's lives. At the end of the day -- that is my bottom line."

KaBOOM! and **The Home Depot** have worked together over the last nine years to develop a community build model that sparks civic leadership and revitalizes communities through creating great playspaces for children. In 2005, KaBOOM! and The Home Depot launched an unprecedented initiative to create and refurbish "1,000 playspaces in 1,000 days" throughout North America. Over the next three years, The Home Depot will invest \$25 million and nearly 1 million volunteer hours in support of this program, which is expected to benefit 1.5 million parents and children.

"This award is about more than just our ability to create positive change in the lives of children and communities," said **Darell Hammond, CEO of KaBOOM!** "It also is a testament to our outstanding partner, The Home Depot, its associates, and its CEO, Bob Nardelli. With their support, we can make our vision of a great place to play, within walking distance of every child in America, become a reality."

Leaders from the corporate, media, nonprofit, government, and academic sectors are coming together to honor these organizations at the **CECP Excellence Awards Luncheon** held today in New York City. **Terry McGraw and The McGraw-Hill Companies** are hosting the event, while **Alan Hassenfeld (Hasbro)** and **Bob Wright (GE)** are presenting awards. In addition, **Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Louise Fréchette** is appearing to recognize the five CEOs (four of whom are CECP members) asked by **President Bush** to lead the South Asia Earthquake Relief Fund. **Hank McKinnell (Pfizer)** is presenting an update on the fundraising efforts.

Several other celebratory events, in addition to the Excellence in Corporate Philanthropy Awards luncheon are planned for National Corporate Philanthropy Day:

- **CEO-only "Board of Boards" brainstorm session** called by Sandy Weill to mobilize Corporate America to address major societal issues through corporate philanthropy. More than 35 CEOs from Fortune 500 companies are confirmed to attend.
- **Ringing of the NYSE Opening Bell** by the winners of CECP's Excellence Awards convenes senior executives of the most innovative and socially aware companies and an exceptional nonprofit organization.
- **The Empire State Building** lighting ceremony in the colors of National Corporate Philanthropy Day – blue and green.

CECP is supporting its member companies by planning activities to coincide with National Corporate Philanthropy Day, and delivering resources to companies on its website (www.CorporatePhilanthropy.org/day). Giving professionals and members of the media who visit www.CorporatePhilanthropy.org/day will find valuable resources and tools, information on events and participating companies, and areas for posting and viewing corporate philanthropy initiatives.

Members of the Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy (CECP), a powerful network of senior executives committed to corporate philanthropy, are leading National Corporate Philanthropy Day. Founded by Paul Newman and Ken Derr, CECP includes over 100 CEOs and Chairpersons, representing companies responsible for about 50% of all corporate philanthropy in America.

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