

## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **2003 MINNESOTA QUALITY AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED**

The Minnesota Council for Quality, Minneapolis, today announced the recipients of the 2003 Minnesota Quality Award. Three organizations received recognition at the Advancement Level: Micro-Tech Hearing Instruments, Plymouth; Tappe Construction, Eagan; and Unisys Central Development Lab, Roseville. The United States Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, received recognition at the Commitment Level.

“The four organizations receiving the 2003 Minnesota Quality Award represent the diversity of Minnesota’s economy – a manufacturer, two service organizations, and a public sector agency,” says Brian Lassiter, president of the Minnesota Council for Quality. “This demonstrates that – despite tough conditions the last few years – Minnesota organizations are once again focusing on systematic improvement and positioning themselves for the future.”

Founded in 1991, the primary objective of the Minnesota Quality Award is to help organizations improve their performance results. The Award also serves to recognize performance excellence throughout the state. The Minnesota Quality Award is given at four levels – Excellence (the top Award), Achievement, Advancement, and Commitment – and is the culmination of a rigorous assessment process that uses the Criteria for Performance Excellence of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Since 1991, 63 organizations have received recognition at various levels.

Organizations that participate in the process receive comprehensive feedback that outlines their strengths and improvement opportunities along several dimensions: leadership; strategic planning; customer and market focus; measurement, information, and knowledge management; human resource focus; process management; and results. This feedback is used for organizational learning, planning, and improvement.

“This process validated much of what we thought we knew about our business system,” says Mike Tappe, President and CEO of Tappe Construction in Eagan. “But receiving the feedback from an independent source helped to motivate our improvement efforts. The feedback also identified a few things that we hadn’t considered, so it provided a great deal of value for helping us continue our improvement journey.”

Larry Hagen, President and CEO of Micro-Tech states: “The Baldrige framework saved my business. Five or six years ago, we were struggling to break-even as a company and were on the brink of bankruptcy. We began using quality tools and the Baldrige Criteria in 1998 and have since seen remarkable results – revenue growth far exceeding the industry average, and improvements in profit, employee-related results, and operations. Though we have come a long way, we will use the feedback from the Minnesota Quality Award process to continue to improve key aspects of our business.”

The Minnesota Quality Award public recognition event is next Thursday, May 20, from 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM at the International Market Square in Minneapolis. The event is sponsored by Virchow, Krause & Company. The four organizations will offer comments, and the event will also feature remarks by Dick Pettingill, President and CEO of Allina Hospitals & Clinics. Allina is using the Minnesota Quality Award Criteria to improve its business and outcomes. Admission is \$30 for non-members of the Council. For more information or to register, please email the Council at [info@councilforquality.org](mailto:info@councilforquality.org).

The four organizations were also each recognized in private ceremonies at their facilities.

#### **About the Minnesota Council for Quality**

Founded in 1987, the Minnesota Council for Quality is a non-profit that helps organizations improve performance and competitiveness. The Council's primary service is a comprehensive organizational assessment that identifies strengths and improvement opportunities and serves as the foundation for the Minnesota Quality Award. In addition, the Council brokers improvement-related resources, information, knowledge, and best practices within and between Minnesota organizations. For more information, please visit our website at [www.councilforquality.org](http://www.councilforquality.org).

#### **About Micro-Tech Hearing Instruments**

Micro-Tech, based in Plymouth, Minnesota, is one of the most respected developers and manufacturers of hearing-aid technology. With approximately 200 employees, Micro-Tech provides hearing instruments to hearing professionals across the US. Their vision is "To be the preferred supplier of hearing instruments through quality, innovation, and caring." For more information, please contact Larry Hagen at 763-519-6560 or visit [www.hearing-aid.com](http://www.hearing-aid.com).

#### **About Tappe Construction**

Tappe Construction, based in Eagan, Minnesota, has over 400 employees providing carpentry labor services in the areas of framing, exterior finish, and interior finish. Tappe uses a teaching method called Programmed Learning, through which their employees study standardized practices of carpentry and management used in the construction of all styles of homes. For more information, please contact Jean Bronk at 651-994-0200 or visit [www.tappeconstruction.com](http://www.tappeconstruction.com).

#### **About Unisys CDL**

The Central Development Laboratory (CDL) is a Research and Development organization that is aligned with its parent organizations, Product Development & Technology (PDT), and Systems & Technology (S&T) to support the Unisys corporate vision and operating principles while providing enterprise-class high-end mission-critical servers based on either Intel or proprietary processors. With approximately 460 employees located in Roseville, principle worldwide markets for the organization's products include: financial services, public sector, communications, transportation, commercial, and media. For more information, please contact Pat O'Boyle at 651-635-6160 or visit [www.unisys.com](http://www.unisys.com).

#### **About US Army Corps of Engineers**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) St. Paul District, executes water resource programs and projects, protects and restores the environment, and provides emergency services to benefit our region and the Nation. Their products and services are navigation, flood damage reduction, environmental restoration, recreation, water/wastewater management, readiness, and regulatory management. The District Office is located at 190 East 5th, St. Paul, with 43 field offices in a five state area. There are over 700 civilian employees. For more information, please contact Russell Williams at 651-290-5428 or visit [www.mvp.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil).

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