

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2004 MINNESOTA QUALITY AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED

The Minnesota Council for Quality, Minneapolis, today announced the recipients of the 2004 Minnesota Quality Award. Seven organizations received recognition, three of them at the Advancement Level:

- Dover-Eyota Schools (Eyota, Dover)
- Stora Enso Duluth Mill (Duluth), and
- Winona Health (Winona).

The other four organizations received recognition at the Commitment Level:

- Allina Hospitals & Clinics (Minneapolis),
- Hayfield Community Schools (Hayfield),
- Kingsland Public Schools (Spring Valley, Wykoff), and
- Mayo Clinic Rochester, Radiology Department (Rochester).

“The seven organizations receiving the 2004 Minnesota Quality Award represent many parts of Minnesota’s economy -- a manufacturer, three health care organizations, and three K-12 school districts,” says Brian Lassiter, president of the Minnesota Council for Quality.

They were recognized at a public event Tuesday evening in Bloomington. Attended by nearly 200 leaders, the event was sponsored by Xcel Energy, Micro-Tech Hearing Instruments, Benedictine Health System, and Unisys Corporation. The event also recognized 2004 Minnesota Quality Award Board of Evaluators, a team of over 100 volunteers supporting this program, each giving an average of 100 hours of service.

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, 70 organizations have received Minnesota Quality Award recognition at various levels (a full list is at http://www.councilforquality.org/assess_org_award.cfm).

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.

Dick Pettingill, President and CEO of Allina Hospitals & Clinics states: “At Allina, we are focused on improving our systems and processes so that we can improve how we deliver patient care. The Baldrige model helps us to focus our energy and resources on those issues that will drive patient safety, clinical outcomes, and other performance results. We are on a journey and are diligently working to reach higher levels of excellence.”

“This process validated much of what we thought we knew about our business,” says Pat Moore, Plant Manager at StoraEnso’s Duluth mill. “But the feedback did reveal a few gaps that we hadn’t considered, and we are now working to take our performance to a higher level of performance.”

David Groth, Superintendent of Schools for Dover-Eyota comments on why they have used Baldrige for 10 years: “Schools are facing difficult challenges -- tight funding, changing student demographics, increased educational requirements such as No Child Left Behind, and an overall more demanding society for improved education. We began using Baldrige to improve student learning and improve satisfaction with all our stakeholders: students, parents, the community, and our partners. We have seen tremendous results, but we intend to continue our improvement efforts to increase student achievement and advance our mission.”

The 2005 Minnesota Quality Award cycle has already begun, and the Council expects more than 10 organizations to receive recognition this year.

“Minnesota organizations have always led the nation in quality and organizational improvement,” says Lassiter. “The fact that an increasing number of organizations are using sophisticated management frameworks like Baldrige, Six Sigma, Lean, and others, indicates that organizations in this state intend to remain leaders in their industries.”

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.

About Allina Hospitals & Clinics

Allina Hospitals & Clinics represent a family of hospitals, clinics, and care services in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. With over 22,000 total employees, Allina is among the largest health care providers in Minnesota. Allina provides a continuum of care, from disease prevention programs, to technically advanced inpatient and outpatient care, to medical transportation, pharmacy and hospice services. For more information, please contact Barbara Balik at 612-775-9711 or visit www.allina.com.

About Dover-Eyota Schools

With over 60 full-time teachers, the Dover-Eyota School District serves over 1100 students in southeast Minnesota. Dover-Eyota serves kindergarten through the twelfth grade in three facilities. For more information, please contact Jane Johnson at 507-545-2924 or visit www.desch.org.

About Hayfield Community Schools

Hayfield School District #203 is a district that serves the communities of Brownsdale, Hayfield, Oslo, Sargeant, and Waltham in southeast Minnesota. Its boundaries span an area of 200 square miles from Rochester in the northeast to Austin in the southwest. The District enrolls over 900 students in three K-12 schools and has a total staff of about 130. For more information, please contact Annette Freiheit at 507-477-3225 or visit www.hayfield.k12.mn.us.

About Kingsland Public Schools

Kingsland Public Schools, Independent District #2137, was created in 1992 through the combined efforts and vision of two distinct communities in southeast Minnesota: Spring Valley and Wykoff. The school district currently enrolls approximately 890 students in grades kindergarten through twelve. The district employs 72 certified instructors, three administrators and 60 support personnel. For more information, please contact Greg Ehresmann at 507-352-4341 or visit www.kingsland.k12.mn.us.

About Mayo Clinic Department of Radiology

Mayo Clinic is a charitable, not-for-profit organization based in Rochester. Supporting the Clinic, the Department of Radiology provides diagnostic and interventional imaging services and manages research and education programs. This 100 year-old department (one of the first of its kind) is fully integrated with all the medical services available at the Mayo Clinic. Over 130 radiologists and physicists cooperate with over 1,000 support staff to fulfill the mission of the department. Over 900,000 examinations are performed and interpreted annually, making it the largest radiology department in the US. For more information, please contact Carrie Abendroth at 507-284-2511 or visit www.mayo.edu.

About StoraEnso, Duluth Mill

Stora Enso is an integrated paper, packaging and forest products company producing publication and fine papers, packaging boards and wood products, areas in which the Group is a global market leader. Stora Enso is headquartered in Finland and is also traded on the NYSE. Stora Enso serves its mainly business-to-business customers through its own global sales and marketing network. Customers are large and small publishers, printing houses and merchants, as well as the packaging, joinery and construction industries worldwide. The main markets are Europe, North America and Asia. For more information, please contact Anne Schilling at 218-628-5240 or visit www.storaenso.com.

About Winona Health

Winona Health is a locally owned and operated nonprofit organization whose primary mission is to meet the lifelong healthcare needs of the Winona, Minnesota, regional community. Currently, more than 50 physicians in 13 specialties, 875 staff members, and 300 volunteers serve the community's healthcare needs through several affiliates: Community Memorial Hospital, Lake Winona Manor Nursing Home, Memory Care Residences: Adith Miller & Roger Metz Manors, Parkview Pharmacy, Rushford Clinic, Southeast Minnesota Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Surgery Specialists, Watkins Manor Assisted Living Facility, Winona Area Hospice Services, Winona Health Home Care, and the Winona Health Foundation. For more information, please contact Kathleen Lanik at 507-457-4470 or visit www.winonahealth.org.

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