

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THREE ELECTED TO THE 2005 MINNESOTA QUALITY AWARD PANEL OF JUDGES

The Minnesota Council for Quality, Minneapolis, is pleased to announce the recent election of three new judges to the 2005 Minnesota Quality Award Panel of Judges:

- Dr. Debra Bowers, Superintendent, ISD 283 (St. Louis Park Schools)
- Dr. Mary Ann Nelson, Assistant Commissioner of Academic Excellence, Minnesota Department of Education
- Rachelle Schultz, President and CEO, Winona Health.

“With the election of the three new Judges, the 15-member Panel of Judges now better represents the diversity of our economy,” says Brian Lassiter, president of the Council. “The Panel includes representatives from the manufacturing, service, health care, education, and public sectors. They represent leaders in their fields, and have a tremendous depth of knowledge and management experience upon which to judge the quality and performance levels of Minnesota organizations.”

The primary role of the Panel of Judges is to determine levels of recognition for organizations participating in the Minnesota Quality Award. Judges also provide coaching and feedback to evaluation teams as they conduct organizational assessments for the Award.

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 recognition at various levels; a full list can be found 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.

The current Panel of Judges include the following members: Dr. Debra Bowers, St. Louis Park Schools; Jean Bronk, Mortensen Construction; Rick Carlson, Medica; Gary Floss (Chief Judge), Marvin Windows and Doors; Dr. Julie Furst-Bowe, University of Wisconsin-Stout; Paul Grizzell, Studer Group; Dr. Robert B. Jones, Department of Human Services; Lois Mackin, Independent Consultant; Linda Mazzuco, Unisys Corporation; Dr. Mary Ann Nelson, Minnesota Department of Education; Pat O’Boyle, Unisys Corporation; Mike Reagan (Chief Judge), Brainerd Regional Human Services, retired; Ken Rich, Independent Consultant; Rachelle Schultz, Winona Health; and Michael Wirth-Davis, Goodwill/Easter Seals of Minnesota.

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.

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