

PRESS RELEASE

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DRIASI ACHIEVES COMMITMENT LEVEL OF THE MINNESOTA QUALITY AWARD

The Minnesota Council for Quality recently announced that Chanhassen, Minnesota-based DRIASI achieved the Commitment to Excellence level of the 2001 Minnesota Quality Award.

The Award will be presented at an employee appreciation meeting on March 7th. Dick Votel, CEO of DRIASI, states: "This process has been a learning experience in many respects. It has validated some of our strengths and has helped us identify potential improvement opportunities going forward."

DRIASI, a third party administrator that specializes in administrative services for the financial services industry, has been on an improvement journey since Mr. Votel joined the firm more than two years ago. Under Mr. Votel's leadership, financial performance and other business results have seen noticeable improvements. "We believed that getting an outside assessment of our improvement efforts would help us continue to build upon the performance levels we had already attained."

Founded in the early 1990's, the primary objective of the Minnesota Quality Award is to help organizations improve their results and competitiveness and to recognize performance excellence throughout the state. A Minnesota Quality Award is the culmination of a rigorous assessment process that uses the Criteria for Performance Excellence of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

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

"DRIASI has demonstrated a serious commitment to organizational excellence," says Brian Lassiter, president of the Minnesota Council for Quality. "We are pleased to recognize their success and challenge them to continue their improvement journey."

DRIASI intends to do so. "DRIASI will use the feedback to prioritize and plan for future improvements," says Votel. "This is an important step in our quest for excellence and quality, and certainly it is not the end of our journey. We view the Minnesota Council for Quality's assessment process as another step in our continuing pursuit of quality to help us achieve our goals of growth, process excellence, and quality."

About DRIASI

Based in Chanhassen, Minnesota, DRIASI is a third party administrator that provides the financial services industry with administrative services such as mail fulfillment, multi-channel customer service, underwriting, claims payment and premium billing/collection. A 20-year old company, DRIASI has clients in all fifty states and employs over 100 people.

About the Minnesota Council for Quality

Founded in 1987, the Minnesota Council for Quality is a non-profit with a dual mission of helping organizations improve their performance and competitiveness as well as to recognize performance excellence throughout the state. Along with the Minnesota Quality Award, the Council offers other services that advance improvement within and between Minnesota organizations.

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