

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AWB Honors Local Companies for Their Commitment to a Better Workplace

OLYMPIA—The Association of Washington Business presented 18 members with its annual Better Workplace Awards at its 2006 Legislative Reception February 8. The awards honor companies that are innovators in workplace safety, job training and advancement, and benefit and compensation programs.

AWB's Better Workplace Awards for 2005 recognize member businesses, both small and large, that go the extra mile to provide a family-friendly work environment, promote safety and enable employees to achieve their best. "These awards are given to dispel the myth that most businesses do not care about its employees," AWB President Don Brunell said. "So many companies provide extra employee services it is almost too difficult to award only 19 of them."

An independent panel of judges reviews all of the nominees and decides who gets the award based on several factors. AWB also gives Continuous Commitment awards to companies that have won the award in previous years and have continued to be innovators in providing a better workplace.

The following are the 2006 Better Workplace Award winners from eastern Washington:

Award for Workplace Safety

Fluor – winner

Fluor Hanford received the 2006 Workplace Safety Award for companies of 250 or more employees for its success in using ergonomics improvements to reduce injuries. Workers are cleaning up aging facilities that were once part of the nuclear weapons-production complex at the U.S. Department of Energy's Hanford Site in southeastern Washington State. The two "K

Basins” and their contaminated contents pose a potential threat to the nearby Columbia River. The involvement of employees and management led to a dramatic improvement in working conditions and a 90 percent reduction in injuries while completing the job.

Pacific Northwest National Laboratory – winner

Richland’s Pacific Northwest National Laboratories (PNNL) provides a safe work environment for its employees. PNNL’s Voluntary Protection Program is a partnership between management and staff to improve PNNL’s safety culture continuously. PNNL received the Dept. of Ecology’s STAR site certification in 2001 and again in 2004. Voluntary Protection Program initiatives include an employee led annual program evaluation that helps guide management’s annual safety performance improvement agenda. A program to raise awareness and the causes of injury and illness, an employee wellness program and a Web site integrating all of PNNL’s safety communications into a single venue.

For more detailed description of the recipient’s achievements, or to obtain photos of the awards ceremony, please contact AWB’s Shawn Sullivan at shawns@awb.org.

-30-

AWB is Washington's oldest and largest statewide business association. Formed in 1904, its 5,600 members employ more than 600,000 workers. AWB also is the state's chamber of commerce and umbrella organization for more than 125 trade and professional organizations. While AWB's membership includes the state's major employers like Boeing, Microsoft and Weyerhaeuser, more than 85 percent of AWB members employ fewer than 100, and one-third of our members hire fewer than 10.