



NIRI-CHICAGO WINS NIRI'S COVETED BEST OVERALL LARGE CHAPTER AWARD

The Chicago chapter also wins Best External Affairs Award for large chapter

CHICAGO - June 14, 2004 - The Chicago chapter of the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI-Chicago) announced today that it has won the highly coveted "Best Overall Chapter" award for large chapters, as well as the "Best External Affairs" for large chapters. The awards were presented to the chapter during the gala awards dinner June 5 in Phoenix, where the annual NIRI National conference was held from June 6-9.

Commenting on the award, outgoing NIRI-Chicago President and newly elected Chairman Cindy Klimstra said, "It is a great honor for the chapter to receive the Best Overall Chapter award for a large chapter. Our board and many chapter volunteers worked enthusiastically throughout the year to bring about the ambitious goals the board set for the chapter last summer. While we achieved most of our goals, we remain focused on finding ways to continue improving the value we provide to our membership. We always encourage feedback from our members to help us understand how to better serve the chapter."

Said incoming NIRI-Chicago President Steven D. Carr, "Being recognized with the Best Overall Chapter Award clearly demonstrates the vibrancy and vitality of the chapter's leadership and membership. We are fortunate to have members so dedicated to promoting professional development and developing a sense of community that is critically important for the success of the chapter and its members. I'd like to take this opportunity on behalf of the chapter to thank Cindy Klimstra, our outgoing president, for the tremendous leadership and support she gave us during her tenure as president of the chapter, which contributed greatly to the award."

The chapter's accomplishments during the year include:

- creating a stronger sense of community among the chapter's members with an enhanced website, local networking events and development of a chapter logo;
- providing more advanced education and improved networking opportunities through the annual workshop, a senior focus group, alternative meeting times; a program brochure and a program poll;
- fostering an active volunteer network to encourage participation in chapter activities; and
- providing innovative programming, including the Triad Awards for annual reports, sponsored jointly in partnership with the IASC and AIGA; and the Chicago CFO of the Year Award, co-sponsored with the Kellogg Graduate School of Management.

Presiding over the judging panel for the awards for NIRI was Maureen Wolff-Reid, President, Boston-based Sharon Merrill Associates, Inc., and a member of the National Investor Relations Institute board of directors. Said Wolff-Reid about NIRI-Chicago's award, "The Chicago chapter stood out of the many excellent entries we had this year, with its innovative programs, strong member outreach and strategic partnerships.

"The panel was impressed as well with the alliances that the Chicago chapter forged with such high-caliber professional organizations such as the Investment Analysts Society of Chicago (IASC), the Kellogg Graduate School of Management, the American Institute of Graphic Arts (IAGA) and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Creating such alliances improves the educational and networking opportunities for the chapter's members, and at the same time promotes the visibility of both the NIRI Chicago chapter and the overall NIRI organization."

The NIRI panel presented 39 awards at the gala awards dinner. In addition to the best overall chapter awards for large and small chapters, best-in-category awards were also presented for large and small chapters in Programs, Special Event, Member Services and External Affairs. The San Diego chapter received the award for the best overall small chapter.

About NIRI-Chicago

The Chicago chapter of the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI-Chicago) works to advance the practice of investor relations and meet the growing professional development needs of those engaged in the field. The members of NIRI-Chicago include corporate officers, consultants, service providers, academics, and others involved in the practice of investor relations, which is a strategic management responsibility that integrates finance, communication, marketing and securities law compliance. With more than 200 members, NIRI-Chicago is one of the largest NIRI chapters in the United States. More

information is available at www.niri-chicago.org.