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NIRI-Chicago Names 2013-2014 Officers and Directors, Recognizes Local NIRI Fellows

CHICAGO – June 20, 2013 – The Chicago Chapter of the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI-Chicago) has elected six officers and eight directors to its board for the 2013-2014 term. At its annual meeting today, the chapter also will recognize retiring board members and two chapter members who were named NIRI Fellows.

“NIRI-Chicago offers its Midwest members both topical educational programs and engaging social networking opportunities,” said Elizabeth M. Higashi, incoming chapter president. “We host a variety of events on a broad range of IR topics with experts in the fields of IR, communications, finance, capital markets, regulatory issues, corporate governance and career development. Our community benefits from the range and size of companies and individuals who comprise our membership and who willingly share their expertise and experiences at our formal and informal events.

“We start our program year with the annual IR Workshop ‘Expanding Horizons’ on September 9, which is open to NIRI members, practitioners and individuals interested in a career in investor relations. We are thrilled that our chapter events also attract participants from neighboring states and we are looking forward to a stellar program year,” Higashi said.

The NIRI-Chicago Chapter board for 2013-2014:

OFFICERS

President: Elizabeth M. Higashi, CFA, president, Higashi Advisors. Higashi most recently served as executive vice president and as a member of the membership committee. Previously, she was the chapter’s vice president-programs and a member of its IR Workshop committee. Higashi was recognized earlier this month with NIRI’s 2013 Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award for her leadership, mentorship, insightful program ideas, and recruitment of nationally recognized speakers to chapter events, including former SEC Chairman David J. Ruder and *Wall Street Journal* Economics Editor David Wessel.

Executive Vice President: Lisa Meers, CFA, vice president-investor relations for Anixter International (NYSE: AXE). Meers was previously vice president and program co-chair for the chapter. In addition, she has led NIRI-Chicago’s sponsorship program and has served on the IR Workshop committee.

Vice President and Co-Chair, Programs: Victoria Sivrais, managing director, FTI Consulting. Sivrais was treasurer last year, and previously served as chair of the chapter’s 2011 IR Workshop committee and co-chair of the 2012 IR Workshop committee.

Vice President and Co-Chair, Programs: Janine Warell, corporate and investor communications consultant. Warell is returning as programs co-chair and earlier was vice president-communications for two years.

Vice President-Communications: Maryellen T. Thielen, ABC, senior manager, financial communications, Allstate (NYSE: ALL). Thielen has held several positions on the NIRI-Chicago board, including chairman, president, executive vice president and vice president-communications. She is an Accredited Business Communicator (ABC), a designation awarded by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

Vice President-Membership: David Smith, managing director, capital markets and investor relations, Aviv REIT (NYSE: AVIV). This will be Smith's second year on the board. He currently serves on the 2013 IR Workshop committee and previously volunteered on the chapter's membership committee.

Vice President-Treasurer: Ruth E. Venning, director, investor relations, Hospira, Inc. (NYSE: HSP). During Venning's tenure on the NIRI-Chicago board, she has served as chairman, president, executive vice president, vice president-programs, vice president-communications and vice president-membership. She also has chaired five NIRI-Chicago IR Workshops and served as a member of the NIRI Annual Conference committee for the past two years.

DIRECTORS

Chairman: Lisa I. Ciota, manager, investor relations, SunCoke Energy, Inc. (NYSE: SXC). Ciota previously served as president, executive vice president and vice president-programs. She also led the chapter's sponsorship and webcast programs and has co-chaired past NIRI-Chicago IR Workshops.

Director: Elizabeth Allen, manager, investor relations, FedEx Corp. (NYSE: FDX). This will be Allen's first year on the NIRI-Chicago board. She has previously been a featured speaker at chapter meetings and was a member of the committee that planned this year's NIRI Annual Conference.

Director: Christine J. Hanneman, principal, Professional Communications Specialists. Hanneman leads NIRI-Chicago's sponsorship program. Previously, she served as vice president-treasurer for six years.

Director: Dee Johnson, vice president, investor relations, Rubicon Technology (NASDAQ: RBCN). While this will be Johnson's first year on the NIRI-Chicago board, she earlier served as president and in other leadership roles with NIRI St. Louis. She also is a member of the 2013 IR Workshop committee.

Director: Kevin P. Kelly, managing director, Morrow & Co., LLC. Kelly has served as chairman, president, executive vice president and vice president-programs and chaired the IR Workshop for three years. He currently serves on the chapter's sponsorship committee.

Director: Larry Larsen III, senior vice president, MSL Group. This will be Larsen's second year on the NIRI-Chicago board. He currently serves as chair of the 2013 IR Workshop committee.

Director: Patricia M. (Patty) Paul, principal, ButtonWood Associates. Paul has served as NIRI-Chicago chairman, president, executive vice president and vice president-programs. She previously co-chaired the chapter's IR Workshop and a NIRI national conference and served on the board of NIRI's New York Chapter.

RETIRED BOARD MEMBERS

The chapter also wishes to extend its gratitude to directors who are departing the board:

Steven D. Carr, J.D., CCEP, managing director, Dresner Corporate Services Inc. During Carr's tenure on the NIRI-Chicago board, he has served as chairman, president and executive vice president. He holds a J.D. and is a Certified Compliance and Ethics Professional (CCEP). Carr has been named to the chapter's advisory board.

Steven P. Eschbach, CFA, vice president, investor relations, Integrys Energy Group, Inc. (NYSE: TEG). Eschbach served for seven years on the NIRI-Chicago board, including as vice president-membership for four years. Eschbach is the past president of the NIRI Rocky Mountain Chapter (2001) and past president of the NIRI Connecticut/Westchester Chapter (2006-2007).

NIRI FELLOWS

At the national level, two chapter members were named to the inaugural [NIRI Fellows](#) class in recognition of their leadership, integrity, involvement and contributions to the investor relations profession.

Jane McCahon is vice president - corporate relations and corporate secretary, Telephone and Data Systems (NYSE: TDS). Her leadership in the investor relations profession has included numerous roles within NIRI, including as former chair of NIRI national, co-founder and former chair of the NIRI Ethics Council, service on the NIRI Senior Roundtable Steering Committee, and past leadership of NIRI-Boston, which named her an honorary director. McCahon also is a member of the Society of Corporate Secretaries and Governance Professionals.

Mark Steinkrauss retired in 2009 as vice president of investor relations, also for Telephone and Data Systems (NYSE: TDS). Throughout his long career, Steinkrauss promoted IR as a strategic management function and served as a role model and mentor to others in the profession. Before joining TDS, he led investor relations for Fruit of the Loom and Digital Equipment. He has served as chairman and CEO of NIRI and as president of its predecessor organization, the Investor Relations Association. IR was Steinkrauss' second career: he served 25 years in the U.S. Navy and retired as a commander.

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 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 a strategic management responsibility that integrates finance, communication, marketing and securities law compliance. NIRI-Chicago is one of the largest NIRI chapters in the United States and has received several NIRI awards for large chapters over the years, including Best Overall Large Chapter in 2012. More information is available at www.niri-chicago.org.

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