INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard today hosted the 8th Annual Mayor’s Celebration of Diversity Awards Ceremony. The Mayor's Celebration of Diversity Award recognizes businesses and organizations that encourage, embrace, and celebrate differences that foster a better place in which to live, work and raise family.

“During these challenging economic times, our city is being recognized as one poised to weather the storm better than many of our peer cities,” said Mayor Ballard. “This is due in large part to our commitment to supporting and celebrating diversity – our commitment to ‘diversify diversity’.”

Recognition for the Mayor’s Celebration of Diversity Awards is based on stellar performance in all or one of the following four areas: Workforce Diversity, Development, Community Relations, and Leadership.

Below is a list of the award recipients and a brief description of their accomplishments.

**Sam H. Jones Award**
This special award, which represents the “Best of the Best,” named in honor of the first president of Indianapolis Urban League and a tireless advocate for peace, justice and understanding in Indianapolis – is the top award given and recognizes a business or organization with the strongest performance in all four categories.

**Award Recipient: Community Health Network**
Community Health Network goes to great lengths in its efforts to create and nourish a diverse workforce. Community’s leadership strongly believes that diversity among employees helps the network to better reflect the population it serves and provides the organization with improved understanding of its patient/family population. The network’s leadership strives to create a positive culture and professional development opportunities to make Community a satisfying place to achieve one’s career goals. Community leaders know that diversity is a key to the success of the organization’s mission of serving the health care needs of all.
Development in Diversity Award: This award is presented to a company or organization that excels in providing opportunities for diversity education and communication within the organization.

Award Recipient: Barnes & Thornburg LLP
A number of years ago, the firm’s management fashioned and approved a Diversity Action Plan which is now a living document, addressing innovations for recruitment and retention, mentoring, professional skills development programs, and community involvement. The firm’s Diversity Committee, which includes representatives from all of its offices, regularly advises firm management on diversity issues, provides career development coaching for women and minorities, develops flexible work options for legal professionals, and serves as a liaison among personnel functions, the recruiting committee, and firm management.

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Community Relations Award
This award is presented to a company or organization that excels in promoting activities which encourage and support diversity in the community.

Award Recipient: Simon Property Group
Simon Property Group makes diversity a focus and a priority by providing corporate contributions and volunteers from among its employees for events such as the Circle City Classic, the NAACP, the Indianapolis Urban League, Habitat for Humanity, Toys for Tots, Dress for Success, and the United Way’s Back Pack Attack, and by investing in the future of promising minority youth through the Simon Youth Foundation.

Leadership in Diversity Award
This award is presented to a company or organization that excels in implementing a vision that supports diversity strategies throughout the organization.

Award Recipient: Turner Construction Company
Turner Construction Company’s diversity mission statement encourages the retention and development of a diverse and highly qualified workforce, a company culture that mobilizes employees around shared goals, and a work environment where employees can contribute creative ideas, seek challenges, assume leadership roles and continue to focus on meeting and exceeding business and personal objectives. Additionally, Turner has implemented a Diversity Action Council made up of a cross section of employees from across the country.

Workforce Diversity Award
This award is presented to a company or organization that has made great strides in the diversity representation in the workplace.

Award Recipient: Veolia Water Indianapolis, LLC
Veolia Water embraces diversity and has an active recruitment program that takes steps to ensure that persons are recruited, hired, assigned and promoted without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, sex, veteran’s status, age or disability including, but not limited to: providing bilingual agents in its customer service center; working actively with specialized minority recruitment firms to fill open employment opportunities; targeting minority participates for its apprenticeship program; and providing a revamped new employee orientation to better address cultural diversity issues, particularly among field services employees.

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