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New North Companies Help Wisconsin Win Silver Shovel

Bremner-Ripon Foods, Hattiesburg Paper, KI Honored by *Area Development Magazine* for Job Creation, Investment

NEW NORTH, July 2, 2007 – *Area Development Magazine* honored Wisconsin with a Silver Shovel award for economic development in its June, 2007 issue, highlighting three high-profile expansion projects in Northeastern Wisconsin as part of the reason for Wisconsin's success.

"Business development in the New North is booming, and the fact that three projects in the region have been singled out for national recognition confirms that fact," said Jerry Murphy, Executive Director of the New North, Inc.

Each state was rated based on five factors: direct job creation numbers, new jobs per capita, amount of company investment, number of new facilities, and number of projects creating high value-added jobs. Wisconsin received a silver shovel in the 3 to 10 million population category.

Area Development examined expansion projects in different industries throughout each state when determining the overall state rankings. Three New North companies, Hattiesburg Paper, Krueger International (KI), and Bremner-Ripon Foods, were ranked among the top ten projects in Wisconsin in terms of economic investment and number of jobs created.

The North Operations facility of Hattiesburg Paper, located in Green Bay, purchased new equipment and modernized its manufacturing plant in 2006. The \$25 million project helped create 200 jobs in the region, and received \$1 million from the state in the form of an Enterprise Development Zone (EDZ) tax credit. The company, which was purchased from Kimberly Clark in 2005 by Greg Santaga, the President and CEO of Green Bay Converting, produces paper products for the food service industry.

KI, also headquartered in Green Bay, is currently expanding its manufacturing facility in Bonduel. The \$1.1 million project, which has received \$375,000 in EDZ tax credits, will create up to 75 jobs over the next three years. KI, which has over 3,000 employees worldwide, is an award-winning manufacturer of high-quality furniture.

Bremner-Ripon Foods, formerly Ripon Foods, received \$3 million from the state, in addition to a \$55,000 training grants, to upgrade and expand its plant in Ripon. Bremner-Ripon is a division of Ralcorp, and is the largest supplier of private label cookies and crackers in the country. The project will ultimately create 100 jobs over the next two years.

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“Regardless of the industry, Northeast Wisconsin offers everything a company needs to grow and thrive,” Murphy said. “With a talented labor force, a supportive economic development network, and an ideal environment, the New North is the perfect place to live and do business.”

New North, Inc. is a regional collaboration effort focused on promoting regional cooperation and economic development in an 18-county region in Northeast Wisconsin. The 18 counties included in the New North are Outagamie, Winnebago, Calumet, Waupaca, Brown, Shawano, Oconto, Marinette, Door, Kewaunee, Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Florence, Menominee, and Waushara. To find out more information about New North, Inc., please visit our website at www.thenewnorth.com.

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