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W.net Announces Winners of 2nd Annual DIVA Awards

Awards Presentation Highlights Individuals and Companies Dedicated to Inspiring & Empowering Women in the Electronic Transactions Industry

(McLean, VA, October 20, 2009) – Women Networking in Electronic Transactions (W.net), the leading organization for the development of women leaders in the electronic transactions industry, is pleased to announce the winners of its 2009 DIVA Awards. Presented during W.net's Super LINC New York event held October 14th, 2009 at Two Times Square Restaurant & Lounge inside the Renaissance New York Hotel Times Square, the winners of the 2nd Annual DIVA Awards are:

The Diversity Champion Award

The 2009 Diversity Champion Award was presented to Atlanta-based First Data Corporation, which has continued to demonstrate its belief in W.net's mission. Through its generous event sponsorships and support of W.net membership among its employees, First Data stands committed to the empowerment of women throughout the industry. Additionally, employees of First Data account for nearly 20 percent of W.net members, with many of these women also taking an active leadership role and regularly attending W.net LINC events.

The Strongest LINC Award

The 2009 Strongest LINC Award was presented to LINC Atlanta. This LINC has hosted three events to date, each with more than 50 participants, and included a panel discussion with seasoned veterans, a holiday wine-tasting, and a networking-social with a number of industry-related attendees – branching out from the issuing and payments side, to banks and vendors. Additionally, LINC Atlanta launched a number of initiatives to promote the group – and the organization as a whole – including being on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

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The Spirit Award

The 2009 Spirit Award was presented to Sarah Owen, Vice President of Market Development & Mobile Commerce at First Data Corporation. Having recently moved to the Atlanta area for her position at First Data's corporate headquarters, Sarah reached out to the LINC Chair early on to say she would like to get involved. She actively recruited for the last LINC Atlanta event, sending multiple recommendations to encourage both women from First Data and women from non-member companies in Atlanta to get involved. Furthermore, Ms. Owen went out of her way to circulate the news to many male senior managers at First Data and other companies to encourage them to also promote the organization. She has attended numerous events and recruited nearly 30 members. Her energy, dedication and committed to W.net's success is unmistakable.

—w.net—

ABOUT the DIVA Awards:

Now in its second year, the Driving Improvement Via Action (DIVA) Awards are W.net's way of honoring the outstanding achievements of individuals, companies and W.net members alike who, throughout the course of the past year, have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to W.net and its mission to inspire and empower women in the electronic transactions industry to maximize their individual potential and position themselves for greater personal success.

The Diversity Champion Award

This award is presented to the W.net Corporate Champion sponsor who, over the course of the past year, has exemplified the spirit of diversity through contributions and in practice within their organization and demonstrated leadership in expanding opportunities for women.

The Strongest LINC Award

The Strongest LINC Award is presented to the Local Interest Networking Circle (LINC) for their outstanding achievements throughout the past year. Demonstrating an unparalleled commitment to the principles that guide the association, the recipient of the Strongest LINC Award is decided upon based on a number of factors based off the annual reports submitted to the Board detailing each LINC's organized efforts throughout the past year. Such factors include number of meetings held, social events, recruitment and participation, and philanthropic activities.

The Spirit Award

The Spirit Award is presented to the W.net committee member who, in addition to all of W.net's committee members past and present, demonstrates a sincere and genuine commitment to furthering W.net's mission. The Spirit Award recipient exemplifies outstanding leadership within the association and continuously encourages and motivates their peers to participate in the promotion and continued support of the W.net brand.

ABOUT W.net:

Founded in 2005, Women Networking in Electronic Transactions (W.net) is the vision of Mary Gerdtts, Linda Perry, Holli Targan and Diane (Vogt) Faro. Collectively, these women represent nearly a century of achievement and unparalleled commitment to, and in, the electronic transactions industry. Leaders and role models in every sense of the word, these women strive to ensure a lasting legacy of women leaders for years and generations to come.

W.net hosts a number of events across North America throughout the year, including Local Interest Networking Circle (LINC) meetings and educational seminars where members can exchange ideas, insights and career development tips; the Designer BootCamp Career Development & Leadership Summit; and its annual awards ceremony and luncheon, The Diva Awards. W.net is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and all contributions are thereby tax deductible. For more information on the organization, membership and services provided, please visit www.w-net.biz.