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For release: Dec. 12, 2008

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Program developing local workforce earns top honors ***Arapahoe/Douglas Works! receives national recognition for workforce development***

GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO --- Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was one of only five Workforce Centers in the U.S. to earn the prestigious 2008 National Workforce Association *Workforce Development Award for Excellence*.

From a field of more than 2,900 centers operating throughout the nation, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! was recognized as the Outstanding Urban Workforce Development Agency for its sustainable partnership with the Douglas County School District, Arapahoe Community College, and a host of community employers, including CH2M Hill, Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Burt Automotive, Data Inc., Comcast, Air Methods, Qwest, Adam Aircraft, Sky Ridge Medical, Woodpert, Inc., and Jones Learning Services.

This partnership, called the Expert Technician Academy, addresses the most acute skilled labor needs in information technology, biosciences, healthcare, aerospace, aviation, homeland security and energy and was funded by the Metro Denver WIRED Initiative's Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development grant.

"By working together we're addressing the current and projected skilled labor force needs of employers in these targeted industries," said Arapahoe County Commissioner Pat Noonan. "For workers, we're providing training in electronics, including opportunities to earn certifications in various programs. This helps workers retain their jobs and increase their potential for promotion, while helping job seekers fine tune their hire ability."

Arapahoe/Douglas Works! adds value to its community in two ways; through occupation-specific training programs such as the Expert Technician Academy, and through a labor exchange that makes a wide variety of talent available to local employers. Presently, there are almost 65,000 job candidates at all skill and education levels, including more than 18,000 with a Bachelors degree or higher. Skills of these workers include management, financial, computer sciences, physical and life sciences, healthcare practitioners and support workers, technicians, construction, transportation and production workers, educators and administrative support personnel; an employer can find a qualified candidate to match virtually any open job.

If candidates with the skills employers need cannot be found, then Arapahoe/Douglas Works! provides custom occupational training through programs such as the Expert Technician Academy, which will serve 225 people throughout 2008, and thus far has graduated 18 A+ Certified computer technicians and 12 Certified Oracle database administrators.

The next Academy begins January 2009, when Net+, Internet Security and Electronics will be offered. To learn more call Susan Meek at 720-971-9830 or visit www.adworks.org.

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The National Workforce Association is dedicated to strengthening the nation's workforce development system, and its goal is to: provide expertise and input to federal, state and local elected officials to enable them to make sound policy decisions about the workforce system and promote innovation and excellent performance in locally based workforce programs through conferences, training sessions, publications and peer-to-peer exchanges.

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