



Press Release – 06 March 2008

FIRST ANNUAL “ARCHITECTS OF DEFENSE” AWARD PRESENTED AT HGA

Minneapolis, 06 March 2008 – The Defense Alliance held its quarterly meeting Thursday evening at HGA, Inc. in Minneapolis. 110 people representing more than 75 defense-oriented businesses and organizations attended the event which was hosted by HGA (www.hga.com), one of the nation’s leading architectural and engineering firms. Members of Senator Norm Coleman’s staff were also present; the senator was instrumental in encouraging the creation of the Defense Alliance during 2004 as a way to promote job growth in the region.

The event, titled “Architects of Defense,” was meant to be a networking opportunity for the diverse group representing a spectrum of industries that contribute to defense and homeland security. Following a recorded message from Minnesota’s Governor Tim Pawlenty, the Alliance was given an overview of ongoing initiatives (including the new Midwest Center for Defense Sustainment) and upcoming events. The brief program then included: an overview of Lockheed Martin’s Maritime Systems division in Eagan, Minnesota, from the vice president of business development, Karen Conti; a presentation by BAE Systems Armament Systems Division in Minneapolis, by the marketing manager, Ryan May; and a discussion of the state legislature’s role in high technology development, from the senate majority whip, Senator Kathy Saltzman (DFL-56).



The program concluded with the first annual “*Architect of Defense*” award, presented to the President & CEO of Third Wave Systems (TWS), Kerry Marusich. The award is presented to the Defense Alliance individual or corporate member who best exemplifies and promotes the mission of the Alliance (***pictured at left, L-R: Lisa Ferris (TWS), Chip Laingen (Defense Alliance), Kerry Marusich (TWS) and Stephanie Heyroth (TWS).***

The Defense Alliance is an independent organization whose mission is to network and expand Minnesota’s defense and homeland security industries, to create and retain high quality jobs, and to further promote the region’s important contributions to our men and women of the armed forces. Upcoming events include a session on medical defense technologies during the Design of Medical Devices Conference (www.dmdconf.org), April 15, and the annual *Defense Industry Roundtable* with Minnesota’s senators, at 3M in St. Paul, June 9 and 10. This year’s roundtable will be held in conjunction with the two-day quarterly Defense Sustainment Consortium (www.defensesustainment) meeting that has national attendance.