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For Immediate Release

The SHRM Vermont State Council Earns 2008 SHRM Pinnacle Award

(Alexandria, Va., **November 21, 2008**) — The SHRM Vermont State Council has received a 2008 Pinnacle Award, sponsored by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and Automatic Data Processing Inc. (ADP) for excellence in state council and chapter, professional and membership activities.

The Pinnacle is the most prestigious council/chapter award offered by the SHRM, which represents more than 250,000 human resource (HR) professionals around the world.

In 2008, only one of the 52 State Councils and eight of the more than 570 SHRM chapters nationwide were selected for this annual award, which recognizes outstanding programs that demonstrate excellence in the human resource profession. The Pinnacle Awards were established in 1991. **The SHRM Vermont State Council** received this honor because of its “**Working Bridges out of Poverty Project**”.

Since 2006, the SHRM Vermont State Council has educated HR professionals and SHRM chapters around the state on economic diversity—namely, ways to help the working poor stay employed while facing challenges most middle-class employees never consider.

In conjunction with for-profit, nonprofit and government agencies, the council has delivered the Working Bridges training to more than 250 HR professionals and line managers on the workplace implications of economic diversity; implemented an emergency loan and savings program for employees; housed worksite resource coordinators in companies to help employees find help with housing, child care, transportation, economic assistance and other resources without having to leave work; and begun discussions of how to encourage the employees to use health and wellness strategies.

According to Anna White, Workforce Readiness Director for the State Council the emergency loan and savings program has been particularly successful. Employers establish accounts at local credit unions where employees in good standing—typically those employed for a year or more—can borrow a limited amount of money to help them stay at work. Employees have used the money to repair and purchase vehicles, fix home heating systems and travel out of the country for a family emergency. Employees must attend money management training to receive the loan, and many have started to save money after they’ve paid off their loans, White said.

White said the state council wants to expand the training and resources to more employers in the state and start work on “addressing the gap that occurs when a person on state assistance begins to advance at work [and earns more money] and is then cut off from benefits. But that salary increase is not sufficient to make him independent. There’s a gap between assistance and independence.”

“The award winners exemplify strategic business thinking, exceptional leadership, and professional excellence,” said Laurence (Lon) O’Neil, president and CEO of SHRM.

“We are proud to, once again, sponsor this prestigious SHRM award,” said Benito Cachinero, corporate vice president, human resources of ADP. “As a company that employs 47,000 associates and partners with thousands of HR professionals around the world, ADP recognizes the importance of innovative HR practices and programs. The members of the chapters and state councils awarded today embody the leadership, innovation and ambition driving the HR industry forward.”

The SHRM Vermont State Council was established in 2001 to serve Human Resource professionals throughout the state and supporting the initiatives of the four state chapters across Vermont which include the Vermont Human Resource Association which serves the Chittenden county and surrounding areas, the River Valley Human Resource Association which serves the Connecticut River Valley area, the Greater Rutland Area Personnel Executives and finally the Professional Human Resource Management Association which serves HR professionals in the Bennington County area.

Current State Director for the SHRM Vermont State Council, David Twitchell states that the work behind this program could not have been accomplished without the dedication of some key people across the state. The partnerships with Beth Kuhn from the Chittenden County United Way and John Maitland, attorney with Downs, Rachlin and Martin planted the seed three years ago and under their steadfast dedication this program continues to grow across the state of Vermont. Twitchell feels a debt of gratitude is extended not only to them but also to those representatives on the Council from the entire state in getting this program to where it is today.

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Society for Human Resource Management

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ADP

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