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Waukesha County Business Alliance Announces Winners of Don Richards Leadership Award and Waukesha County Advocate of the Year Award

Waukesha, Wis. (July 20, 2017) – The Waukesha County Business Alliance is excited to congratulate the winners of the Don Richards Leadership Award and the Waukesha County Advocate of the Year Award for 2017.

Dave Vetta, former president & CEO of First Business Bank – Milwaukee, is the recipient of the Don Richards Leadership Award. With over 30 years of experience in the investment and banking industry, Vetta repeatedly applies his business acumen to serve the community as a whole. A founding partner of the Waukesha County Manufacturing Alliance, a program of the Alliance, Vetta has committed significant time and resources to help raise the profile of manufacturing, which provides one in five jobs in Waukesha County. He is committed to making young people aware of the excellent career opportunities available with our local manufacturers.

“Dave recognized early the importance of manufacturing to the overall economic vibrancy of Waukesha County,” said Suzanne Kelley, president and CEO of the Waukesha County Business Alliance. “His leadership played a major role in the launch and success of our Manufacturing Alliance, which has reached thousands of Waukesha County students, parents and educators through the Schools2Skills™ program.”

Vetta’s board service includes the United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County, GPS Education Partners, Waukesha Memorial Hospital Foundation, the Waukesha County Community Foundation and Carroll University, where he was named a member of the Carroll University Hall of Fame.

As former publisher of The Business Journal and president of the Board of the Waukesha Area Chamber of Commerce, the late Don Richards’ hands-on leadership, ethics and delight in achieving tangible results have left a lasting impression on our leaders today. The Don Richards Leadership Award was created in his honor in 1993 to inspire and motivate business people to take community leadership roles.

Mike Mooney, principal, chairman and co-founder of MLG Capital, is the recipient of the Waukesha County Advocate of the Year Award. With more than 50 years of diverse and often complex brokerage, development, investment, consulting and planning experience, Mooney has been recognized by the Milwaukee Business Journal as “one of southeast Wisconsin’s most influential power brokers” and a “Who’s Who in Business.” Awards include the Midwest Commercial Real Estate Hall of Fame; the “J. Michael Mooney Award,” created by the Wisconsin Chapter of NAIOP “for extraordinary leadership in

advancing economic development in Wisconsin;" and Realtor of the Year (2006) and Political Leader of the Year (2003) by the Commercial Association of Realtors.

"Because of deep expertise in his field and his candid insights, Mike is recognized as a premier leader in commercial real estate and economic development," said Kelley. "Waukesha County has benefited greatly from his wealth of experience, which has helped shape sound public policies and eliminate or refine unnecessary laws and regulations. Mike played a key role in creating the Waukesha County Business Alliance by bringing together the former Waukesha County Chamber of Commerce and Waukesha County Action Network. Today he continues to serve in a leadership role on the Alliance's Policy Board."

The Waukesha County Advocate of the Year Award celebrates an individual who has demonstrated incredible dedication to making Waukesha County a vibrant and wonderful place to work, play and live. The award was created to honor and remember the late Bart Adams, who passed away unexpectedly in 2016. Bart was a consistent voice for business within the Alliance and the broader community. He liked to work behind the scenes but he embodied the characteristics of a dedicated leader.

"I'm delighted to congratulate both Dave and Mike on these awards," said Kelley. "Both demonstrate the important role business leaders can play in driving a strong economy and excellent quality of life in our community."

Both awards will be presented at the Alliance's 99th annual meeting on Friday, September 8, 2017. The program will be held at the Country Springs Hotel and Conference Center in Pewaukee at 11:30 a.m., with registration beginning at 11:15 a.m. The annual meeting is a chance for business members to connect with each other, celebrate the past year's accomplishments and learn how the Alliance has addressed the issues faced by the business community.

The keynote speaker for the program will be Austin Ramirez of HUSCO International. Also during the event, the role of chairman of the Board of Directors will transfer from Mark Schmitz of Beer Capitol Distributing Inc. to Tom Fotsch of EmbedTek LLC. Register for the program at waukesha.org.

Photos attached: Mike Mooney, principal, chairman and co-founder of MLG Capital
Dave Vetta, former president & CEO, First Business Bank – Milwaukee

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About the Waukesha County Business Alliance

Waukesha County Business Alliance is a countywide chamber of commerce with over 1,200 member companies, representing 75,000+ employees. The mission of the Alliance is to drive economic growth in Waukesha County. The Alliance provides opportunities for its members to advocate on behalf of the business community, develop themselves and their employees, network and build strong business relationships and promote their business. Learn more: www.waukesha.org