

Information Technology Association of Wisconsin (ITAWi) Appoints Jim Rice as Its First President and CEO

Former Charter Communications and Norlight Technology Executive and Entrepreneur Takes Helm of the Information Technology Association of Wisconsin

MADISON, WI – Effective January 1, 2005, The Information Technology Association of Wisconsin (ITAWi), the first statewide organization focused on the needs and requirements of this critical industry sector, has named Jim Rice as its first President and CEO. Mr. Rice brings more than 20 years of experience as an information and network technology executive and entrepreneur to ITAWi and the State of Wisconsin.

In this role, Mr. Rice will lead ITAWi's operating activities, including membership recruitment, program development and delivery, advocacy, and relationships with the broad array of organizations and associations who have an interest in the development and growth of the Wisconsin information technology (IT) marketplace.

"I see enormous changes and opportunities in the IT sector over the next five to ten years. Wisconsin, with its great universities, technical colleges and work ethic, can help companies succeed in this brave new world by focusing on IT workforce development and capital formation," said Jim Rice, CEO and President, ITAWi. "I am excited and honored to be given this opportunity to work with the private and public sectors to further the success of Wisconsin's IT community."

In his previous roles, Mr. Rice spearheaded the development of the nation's first utility-owned state-wide fiber optic network in the mid-80s here in Wisconsin as founding president and CEO of NorLight. Mr. Rice then went on to construct a second state-wide fiber network in the late 90s and early 2000s in Wisconsin as a Corporate Vice President for Charter Communications and founder of Charter Business Networks. In the early 90s, he co-founded Stress Photonics, a technology spin-out from the UW-Madison Engineering Department in the area of thermoelastic stress analysis. While at Charter Communications, he managed the development and successful deployment of the first full scale VoIP telephony technical trial over cable in the US here in Wausau, WI.

"ITAWi is a valuable and timely addition to the state's technology economy, and fills a critical gap in the information technology sector," said Tom Still, President of the Wisconsin Technology Council. "Jim Rice brings critical valuable and highly relevant experience as both an entrepreneur and technology executive to guide the growth and success of ITAWi."

ITAWi was launched in June 2005 and is ushering in a new phase of growth for the Wisconsin Information Technology sector. It is the first statewide organization focused on the needs and requirements of this critical industry. IT firms and firms heavily reliant

on IT represent \$14.3 billion in revenues, 50,000 employees and \$3.8 billion in payroll in Wisconsin.

ITAWi has secured commitments for membership and sponsorship from information technology companies and related industries, spanning Fortune 500 firms to promising startups, located across the state in the Chippewa Valley, Fox Valley, Madison, and Milwaukee areas.

About ITAW (www.itawi.org)

The mission of the IT Association of Wisconsin is to bring stakeholders of the Wisconsin Information Technology sector together to create a thriving environment for firms who depend on or produce IT solutions, to start, grow, and succeed in the worldwide marketplace. The Information Technology Association of Wisconsin is located in Suite 439 at 222 West Washington, Madison, WI 53703.

The Members of ITAWi include AnswerPort, Ascent Partners, Robert W. Baird & Co., Berbee Information Networks Corporation, Capital Data, Inc., CDI Business Solutions, CGI-AMS, Cisco Systems, Inc., CompuPros Inc., CUNA Mutual Group, Extract Systems LLC, Fiserv, Inc., Fox Valley Technical College, Frazier Technology Ventures, Greenbrier and Russel, Inc., IMS, Inacom Information Systems, INI Global, Madison Area Technical College, Manpower, Inc., Mason Wells, Merge Healthcare, Metavante Corporation, Miller Brewing Co., New Resources, Northwoods Software Development, Inc., Quarles & Brady, LLP, SECURA Insurance Companies, Silicon Logic Engineering, Silver Train Inc., Small Tree Communications, LLC., Sonic Foundry Inc., Stratagem Inc., Thin Air Software, VCPI, Venture Investors, Venture Out, Veridian Homes, West Bend Mutual Insurance Company, and Xorbix Technologies.

Sponsors of ITAWi include Manpower, Metavante Corporation, Madison Gas and Electric Company, Sonic Foundry, Foley & Lardner LLP, IMS, RVE Consulting, Spectracom, WE Energies and Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek, S.C.

Major contributors and founding supporters of ITAWi include the Helen Bader Foundation, e-Innovate, Accelerate Madison, Wisconsin IT Leadership Association (WITLA) and the Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation.

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