



Universal Forest Products Wins Cool Places to Work Award

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GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Sept. 2 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Universal Forest Products (Nasdaq: UFPI) was named one of 60 "Cool Places to Work" in Michigan in a first-of-its-kind competition jointly held by Crain's Detroit Business and the Grand Rapids Business Journal.

Universal Forest Products and the other 59 companies appear in the August 29 editions of both publications. An additional report on semi-finalists for the competition appears online at <http://www.crainsdetroit.com>.

Universal's CEO and Vice Chairman William G. Currie said, "We are honored to receive this award and to be recognized for having a strong culture and being a great place to work. It speaks highly of all the people of Universal, who have made it a rewarding and fun workplace as well as a successful company."

Selection for the award was based both on employee nominations and on numerical scores from a survey created by the Southfield-based American Society of Employers, a membership organization that collects workplace data and offers training in human resource issues.

The 60 companies have "created work environments that attract and retain quality workers, especially younger workers," Crain's Publisher Mary Kramer said. "It's very clear that employees prize a workplace that recognizes a balance between 'work' and 'life,' as well as one that offers training and opportunities to advance."

John Zwarenstejn, publisher and CEO of the Grand Rapids Business Journal said, "It was important to include nominations from companies throughout the state of Michigan, and the result certainly shows that 'cool companies' exist in every quadrant of the state. This effort also underscores that cool businesses are of many sizes, and include what we think of as 'traditional' types of businesses as well as those considered to be 'information age' businesses."

Both Crain's and the Grand Rapids Business Journal have been involved in "best places to work" recognition programs in the past. But the "cool places" effort was tweaked to garner nominations from employees who were asked to succinctly state why they liked working for their employer. More than 400 people nominated their workplaces. When duplicated nominations were culled, 285 companies statewide were nominated, and executives at 205 completed an exhaustive on-line survey to provide an objective benchmark of how companies handled work/life initiatives, talent management, organizational communication, total rewards, corporate citizenship and leadership, work environment and recruitment activities.

The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth also promoted the competition to support Gov. Granholm's "Cool Cities" initiatives.

The two business publications will host an awards luncheon September 15 in Detroit to honor the companies, featuring Michigan's First Gentleman, Daniel Granholm Mulhern. The luncheon is being held at the International Conference and Banquet Center in the Antheneum Hotel, 1000 Brush St. in Greektown. Tickets for the luncheon are \$35. To make reservations, visit <http://www.crainsdetroit.com>. For more information, contact Jennifer Dunn at 313-446-6786.

Celebrating 50 years of business, Universal Forest Products is headquartered in Grand Rapids, MI. The Company markets, manufactures and engineers wood and wood-alternative products for D-I-Y/retail home centers, structural lumber products for the manufactured housing industry, engineered wood components for the site-built construction market and specialty wood and wood-alternative packaging for various industries. The Company also provides framing services for site-built construction customers. The Company has approximately 9,500 employees who work in nearly 100 facilities in North America. Universal had 2004 sales of \$2.45 billion. For information about Universal Forest Products on the Internet, please visit the Company's web site at <http://www.ufpi.com>, or call 888-Buy-UFPI.

SOURCE Universal Forest Products, Inc.

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