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Conway Data, Inc.

Press Release

Third Annual *Site Selection* Competitiveness Award Goes to Alabama

Atlanta, May 2, 2005: *Site Selection* has named the Alabama Development Office as the winner of the third annual Competitiveness Award, created especially to honor the accomplishments of state economic development agencies. In Alabama's case, it's been a potent blend of work-force training resources and a collaborative approach to business recruitment between state and local entities.

"We are building off an economic base that began in the mid-1990s with Mercedes-Benz choosing to come to Alabama," said Neal Wade, director of the Alabama Development Office. "Since that time, we have been very fortunate to compete for some other projects – not just in the automotive sector, but in aerospace, general manufacturing and a number of other sectors that have led us to this point."

Alabama's automotive industry has attracted other manufacturers, including Hyundai, and numerous component suppliers, making the state a leading location for that key sector. Central to such companies' decisions to locate in Alabama rather than in a bordering state is the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) program, which has developed customized training programs for more than 200,000 workers at more than 3,500 organizations. "What we keep hearing from CEOs and other business leaders looking to expand is, 'We can find a site anywhere, but it's finding a trainable work force with a strong work ethic that is the difficult part,' " says Wade. AIDT addresses that concern head-on.

"Alabama performed strongly in the categories used to determine the winning state-level agency," said Mark Arend, editor of *Site Selection*. "This award recognizes the efforts of the entire ADO team – the leadership as well as the agency staff who serve on the front lines in the competition to lure investment to the state and create jobs." The Competitiveness Award article is featured in the May 2005 edition of *Site Selection* and will appear on the magazine's Web site (www.siteselection.com) in May. Michigan and Georgia tied for second place followed by Kentucky and Indiana. (A complete list appears at the end of this release.)

States were ranked according to an indexing system based on 10 criteria, most of which are tied to data resident in Conway Data Inc.'s proprietary New Plant database. Conway Data is the publisher of *Site Selection*.

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Categories include per capita jobs and investment numbers for 2004 and over time, the number of top metros and micropolitans in *Site Selection's* 2004 rankings, rates of growth in new and expanded facilities and placement in the magazine's annual business climate survey. The top 20 states in the 10 categories were awarded points according to how they ranked. Alabama earned 123 points in total.

Site Selection magazine, published by Conway Data Inc., delivers expansion planning information to 44,000 executives of fast-growing firms. *Site Selection* is also available via *Site Selection Online* (www.siteselection.com). *SiteNet Dispatch*, a weekly e-mail newsletter, goes to more than 22,000 industry professionals. *Site Selection* is the official publication of the Industrial Asset Management Council (www.iamc.org).

Conway Data is an international publishing and association management company headquartered in Atlanta. The firm manages the Industrial Asset Management Council, the Development Hall of Fame and the World Development Federation (WDF), offers consulting services, and awards the annual Conway Safe Skies Award.

Top 10 Competitive States in 2004

State	Total Points
Alabama	123
Michigan	108
Georgia	108
Kentucky	106
Indiana	103
Ohio	102
Tennessee	100
North Carolina	100
Texas	98
Iowa	86

Kentucky	114
Texas	111
Illinois	102
Ohio	99
Iowa	96
New Mexico	88
New York	80
Virginia	80
Tennessee	79

Top 10 Competitive States in 2003

State	Total Points
Indiana	146