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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Workforce Boards Collaborate to Produce 2003 State of the Workforce Report for the Metropolitan Chicago Region *Groundbreaking Report Provides Critical Perspective of Regional Workforce Issues*

Chicago, IL (November 5, 2003) – The Workforce Boards of Metropolitan Chicago have collaborated with Corporation for a Skilled Workforce to produce the 2003 State of the Workforce Report for the Metropolitan Chicago Region. The Executive Summary of the full Report is now available in print form. Additionally, the full report, Executive Summary and data file of supporting information can be viewed and downloaded from the Workforce Boards' web site, www.workforceboardsmetrochicago.org. The State of the Workforce Report for the Metropolitan Chicago Region is unprecedented in its scope and statistical analysis of the overall region's present and forecasted economic status and labor market standings, and will allow stakeholders, educational institutions and economic organizations to gain a first-time outlook of the region.

The State of the Workforce Report for the Metropolitan Chicago Region is an analysis of the metro-Chicago's workforce supply and demand, the emerging workforce and the quality of life in the region. The report also presents extensive data and interpretation about the key conditions in the region that are significant to development of a quality workforce. The Report compares the Metropolitan Chicago area with eight similar metro-regions across the country, including New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and San Francisco.

The report will provide workforce partners and economic development organizations with a solid foundation for identifying shared goals, planning strategies and prioritizing action across the region, as well as provide a baseline against which to measure future progress. Michael Johl, DuPage County Workforce Board Chair and UPS Community Relations Manager, asserts that "the Report presents a quantitative and qualitative analysis of our area-wide labor market and workforce development challenges... information that is essential to ensuring the region's economic prosperity."

The State of the Workforce Report for the Metropolitan Chicago Region will prove to be a uniquely functional document by granting large-scope entities a comprehensive workforce snapshot of the region as a whole. The Report recognizes the statistical reality that people, jobs and the region's economic ebb and flow do not remain constrained by geographic boundaries such as county or municipal lines. According to Stephen Fallek, Vice President of Strategic Planning for Zurich North America Insurance Group and Chair of The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County, "By collectively addressing issues and priorities that affect the region, we have the opportunity to best serve our constituencies, maximize resources and make a greater economic impact. The Report will make it possible for stakeholders to critique area-wide data in order to implement substantial and significant strategies, benefiting the entire region as well as individual counties and communities."

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Members of the Regional Steering Committee reviewed and analyzed the Report through different phases of completion. Composed of high-level private business leaders who serve on local workforce boards and policy makers representing stakeholders in economic development, labor and the local workforce system and educational community, the Regional Steering Committee was one of the main driving forces behind the overall project, and influenced the content of the 2003 State of the Workforce Report for the Metropolitan Chicago Region.

The Workforce Boards of Metropolitan Chicago form a unique consortium of nine Workforce Boards that cover the municipal areas of Chicago, Northern Cook, South and West Suburban Cook, DuPage, Grundy/Livingston/Kankakee, Kane/Kendall/DeKalb, Lake, McHenry and Will counties. The Workforce Boards play a key role in the economic development of their local workforce areas by forging partnerships between education, economic development, labor, government and community organizations to recruit and retain a highly-skilled workforce for their communities and the region as a whole. For more information please call your local Workforce Board or visit their web site at **www.workforceboardsmetrochicago.org**.

Interviews Available

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