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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2008 EXCELLENCE IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARDS

RICHMOND, Ky. – Eastern Kentucky University’s College of Business and Technology, Kentucky Highlands Investment Corp. and The Center for Rural Development will present the 2008 Excellence in Entrepreneurship Awards (EIEA) on Monday, Sept. 8 during a 11:30 luncheon program at The Center’s headquarters in Somerset, Ky.

Eastern Kentucky University President Dr. Doug Whitlock will serve as emcee for the event and Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet Secretary John Hindman will serve as the keynote speaker.

The annual award was established in 2001 to honor excellence in entrepreneurship throughout Eastern and Southern Kentucky. Awards will be given in four categories – Business, Small Business, Start-Up, and Non-Profit Business – and are determined by the economic success of the enterprise, contributions to the community, job creation and operational achievement as measured by innovative business practices, superior safety achievement and superior technology.

The 2008 awards program will include recognition of the Excellence in Entrepreneurship Collegiate Business Concept Challenge award honorees and the first place team in the youth Entrepreneurial Leadership Institute Business Concept Competition.

“We’ve seen that small companies comprise the engine that drives most of our economy,” said Dr. Robert Rogow, dean of EKU’s College of Business and Technology. “We want to do whatever we can through our partnership to foster small-business

development and recognize those who've been successful in developing companies in Eastern and Southern Kentucky.”

Finalists in the four business categories are:

For-Profit Business: Mr. Richard Rednour, II, owner/president, Rednour Properties, LLC, Clay City, Ky.; Mr. Terry E. Forcht, president/CEO, Forcht Group of Kentucky, Corbin, Ky.; Mr. Shannon Wright and Mr. Kendall Wright, owners, Wright Concrete & Construction, Inc., Dorton, Ky.

For-Profit Small Business: Mr. Jerry W. Rice, owner, Panco Wood Shop, Oneida, Ky.; Mr. Charlie Pinson, president/owner, Charlie Pinson Insurance, Pikeville, Ky.; Mr. Steve Taylor, president, EST Tool & Machine, Inc., Brodhead, Ky.

Start-Up Business: Mr. Brant Poore, president, and Mr. Raymond Sears, vice-president, Information Capture Solutions, LLC, Williamsburg, Ky.; Mr. Brian Floyd and Mr. Scott Floyd, owners, Floyd Industries, LLC, Liberty, Ky.; Ms. Cindy and Mr. Norm Kelly, owners, EZ Care, LLC, Richmond, Ky.

Not-For-Profit Entity: Ms. Stephanie Richards, artistic director, Artists Collaborative Theater, Elkhorn City, Ky.; Mr. Lonnie Cowan, executive director, Chronic Pain Support Group, Inc., offices in Clark, Jessamine, Bourbon, Laurel, Boyle, Montgomery, Madison and Taylor counties, Ky.; Ms. Debbie Long, executive director, God's Food pantry of Pulaski County, Somerset, Ky.

“Supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses is at the heart of the mission of The Center for Rural Development,” said Lonnie Lawson, president and CEO of The Center, “and the encouragement and recognition of Kentucky’s future business leaders is fundamental to the realization of that mission.”

Jerry Rickett, president and CEO of Kentucky Highlands Investment Corp., said “Entrepreneurs are visionaries and risk-takers vital to any community. Whether they succeed or fail, their tenacity and adventurous spirit need to be recognized and applauded. That’s what the Excellence in Entrepreneurship Awards is about.”

2007 award recipients were Stephen P. Branscum, president, Branscum Construction Co., Inc., Russell Springs, Ky – For-Profit Business; Barbara Napier, owner, Snug Hollow Bed & Breakfast, Irvine, Ky. – For-Profit Small Business; Lowell Land, president, Acres of Land Winery, Richmond, Ky. – Start-Up Business; and Wilma

Kelly, executive director, Beattyville Housing and Development Corp., Inc, Beattyville, Ky. – Not-For-Profit Entity. Award recipients in the Collegiate Business Concept Challenge were Patti Holly and Lauren Hale, student honorees; Dr. Bill Davig, ECU Business advisor; and Eastern Kentucky University as the sponsoring school. Also honored at the luncheon was the 2007 Entrepreneurial Leadership Institute Business Concept Challenge team of Rebekah Smith, Staffordsville; Michael Wright, Stanford; Kenna Trent, Morehead; and Richie Mathes, Corbin.

Award winners from previous years will receive invitations to the annual EIEA program and be recognized for their achievement.

For more information on the Monday, September 8 EIEA luncheon program, please visit www.eiea.eku.edu and follow the EIEA links. Information can also be found on the Web at www.centertech.com by following the EIEA links. Reservations for the program are \$20 per person and may be made by calling The Center for Rural Development at (606) 677-6000 or by e-mail at enea@centertech.com. Checks should be made payable to The Center for Rural Development and mailed to: The Center, Attn: EIEA Luncheon, 2292 S. Hwy. 27, Somerset, KY 42501.

To be eligible for the Excellence In Entrepreneurship Awards competition, businesses must be in one of the following 55 Eastern and Southern Kentucky counties: Adair, Bath, Bell, Boyd, Boyle, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Cumberland, Edmonson, Elliott, Estill, Fleming, Floyd, Garrard, Green, Greenup, Harlan, Hart, Jackson, Jessamine, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Lewis, Lincoln, McCreary, Madison, Magoffin, Martin, Menifee, Metcalf, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Powell, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Taylor, Wayne, Whitley, or Wolfe.

FOR EDITORS, NEWS DIRECTORS ONLY – For more information, contact Dr. Robert Rogow, 859-622-1409.