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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**2nd Annual 'Best Places to Work in Indiana' Rankings Announced at  
Indiana Chamber of Commerce Luncheon**

**May 2, 2007 (INDIANAPOLIS)** — Edwards Jones, the country's largest investment firm with 357 Indiana branch offices, and Schmidt Associates, a full-service architectural company in downtown Indianapolis, took top honors today in the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's second annual "Best Places to Work in Indiana" program, which is presented by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

The Indiana Chamber announced rankings for all 50 companies who made the "Best Places to Work in Indiana" list at an awards luncheon at the Indiana Roof Ballroom attended by more than 650 Hoosier businesspeople. Names of companies on the list had been released February 26.

"Best Place to Work" honorees were determined through employer reports and comprehensive employee surveys, with winners selected in two categories: small to medium-sized companies of between 25 and 249 employees, and large-sized companies consisting of 250 or more employees. Out-of-state parent companies were eligible to participate if at least 25 full-time employees are in Indiana.

The Best Companies Group has overseen similar programs in 18 other states. ModernThink, LLC, a workplace excellence consulting firm, handled the selection process. The basis for this initiative is *Fortune* magazine's noted "100 Best Places to Work for " list.

"Edward Jones and Schmidt Associates excel in respecting their employees, providing them with the tools to be successful and offering careers – not just jobs," states Indiana Chamber President Kevin Brinegar. "All of the companies on the list understand the positive business impact of making employees feel valued. We are pleased to recognize them for such model work environments."

At the luncheon, representatives from all designated companies were presented with "Best Place to Work" awards of excellence. Honorees were also featured in a special section of the May/June issue of the Indiana Chamber's *BizVoice*® magazine, released today (and accessible online at [www.bizvoicemagazine.com](http://www.bizvoicemagazine.com)), and through the additional statewide media resources of *Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick*. Other program partners are the Indiana State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management, the Indiana Youth Institute and the Indiana Economic Development Corporation.

All companies that participated in the "Best Places to Work in Indiana" program received an in-depth evaluation identifying strengths and weaknesses according to their employees. This report can be used in developing or enhancing employee retention and recruitment programs. For more information on the Indiana Chamber's "Best Places to Work" program, go to [www.bestplacestoworkIN.com](http://www.bestplacestoworkIN.com). You can sign up to be notified by e-mail when application details for the third annual competition are announced this summer.

Program sponsors for 2007, in addition to Anthem, are AARP, Baker & Daniels, Ball State University, BKD CPAs and Advisors, FedEx, Old National, Professional Staff Management, Simon Property Group and Verizon.

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**About the #1 Small to Medium-sized Company: SCHMIDT ASSOCIATES**

"Everyone is so willing to share and help you to grow and help you to become whoever you want to be. Every day, I know there's a new challenge, there's something new and fun to do, fun to learn, people to

talk to, people to meet. It's just been great," offers Desma Belsaas, graduate architect.

Testimony like this affirms Wayne Schmidt's conviction in starting an architectural firm nearly 31 years ago in downtown Indianapolis. Schmidt Associates today is home to 90 employees.

Everything the company does – internally or externally – is based on the guiding principle of servant leadership. "Very simply, if I serve your needs, whether you're a client or an employee, you will allow me to lead. I firmly believe that you don't declare you're the leader. People have to vote for you to be the leader," Schmidt states.

Throughout the company's evolution, Schmidt has pledged to his staff to: meet payroll, obtain the "right" projects, allow you to do good work, provide for career growth, act with integrity and be intentional with the future.

One aspect is realized through Schmidt Academy, an onsite continuing education program that offers courses related to the company's four distinct career tracks, with 10 classes available for each group.

Freedom is another welcome part of the work dynamic. "People know what their responsibilities and goals are, but there's not a lot of hand-holding," says Susan Sigman, human resource manager.

Adds Deb Kunce, program manager/associate, "We don't have a silver bullet, but people are treated fairly here. We have a lot of independence. The CEO and the principals of the firm are open to new ideas and change, and trying new things. There is a culture of continuing to grow over time."

There is also a culture of taking time to have a little fun – with slipper days, dressing up for Halloween and holding yearly chili cook-offs.

### **About the #1 Large Company: EDWARD JONES**

For the second year in a row, Edward Jones – the nation's largest investment firm – finished first in Indiana's "Best Places to Work" program among large employers. All employees – 788 in Indiana – are actual partners in the company and share in its profits.

Most of the 357 branch offices throughout the state are comprised of a financial advisor and a branch office assistant. As long as profitability is met, individual branch offices have the flexibility to run their offices in the manner that works best for them.

Also ranking high with employees: how the company takes care of them. "I've had some medical setbacks and been out of the office for extended periods three times for cancer treatments," shares Craig Tidball, a financial advisor in Warsaw and 28-year company veteran. "One of the early times, my treatment was going to be experimental and the insurance company would not pay for it. Edwards Jones (corporate office) stepped in and paid over \$100,000 for my care. That kind of sealed my pact with the company forever."

For Heather Carter, a branch office assistant in New Castle, the financial knowledge that is passed along has been especially helpful. "When I came here, I didn't know anything about financial investing, nothing. What I have learned personally has benefited me so much in my own financial situation that it's been such an enormous benefit. I now understand what I need to do to be able to retire early – things that just would have never clicked for me had I not worked here."

The Edward Jones culture, instilled from the corporate office in St. Louis, is a national model for employer and employee satisfaction. Besides Indiana, the firm has recently garnered top "Best Place to Work" honors in six other states: Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio and Oklahoma, as well as made *Fortune Magazine's* "100 Best Places to Work For" list.

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**The full list of "Best Places to Work in Indiana" companies by ranking:**

**Small to Medium-sized Companies (25-249 employees)**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Primary Indiana Location</b>
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Schmidt Associates Indianapolis	1
Sommer Barnard PC Indianapolis	2
VMS Indianapolis	3
G & S Research, Inc. Indianapolis	4
Katz, Sapper & Miller Indianapolis	5
Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau Hammond	6
Somerset CPAs, P.C. Indianapolis	7
Gregory & Appel Insurance Indianapolis	8
Bowen Engineering Corporation Fishers	9
KPMG LLP Indianapolis	10
Network Solutions, Inc. Granger	11
T2 Systems, Inc. Indianapolis	12
The Estridge Companies Carmel	13
Herman and Kittle Properties, Inc. Indianapolis	14
Morales Group, Inc Indianapolis	15
	16

Indiana Organ Procurement Organization Indianapolis	17
Bamberger, Foreman, Oswald & Hahn, LLP Evansville	18
Cripe Architects and Engineers Indianapolis	19
eTapestry Greenfield	20
ISM Education Loans, Inc. Indianapolis	21
Employment Plus Bloomington	22
Colliers Turley Martin Tucker Indianapolis	23
Krieg DeVault LLP Indianapolis	24
Safety Management Group Indianapolis	25
ExactTarget, Inc. Indianapolis	26
LaBov & Beyond, Inc. Fort Wayne	27
Baker Hill Carmel	28
Plymate Inc. Shelbyville	29
Matrix Integration, LLC Jasper	30
Ash Brokerage Corporation Fort Wayne	

**Large Companies (250 or more employees)**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Primary Indiana Location</b>
1	Edward Jones	Statewide
2	The Capital Group Companies, Inc.	Indianapolis
3	Duke Realty Corporation	Indianapolis
4	Emmis Communications	Indianapolis
5	Lauth Group, Inc	Indianapolis
6	Columbus Regional Hospital	Columbus
7	Interactive Intelligence, Inc.	Indianapolis
8	Clark Memorial Hospital	Jeffersonville
9	Ernst & Young, LLP	Indianapolis
10	Centier Bank	Merrillville
11	Crowe Chizek and Company LLC	Indianapolis
12	Lake City Bank	Warsaw
13	St. Joseph Hospital and Health Center	Kokomo
14	Goshen Health System	Goshen
15	Amesbury List	Indianapolis
	oSciences	Indianapolis
17	Irwin Union Bank	Indianapolis
18	Fort Wayne Metals Research Products Corporation	Fort Wayne
19	Baker & Daniels LLP	Indianapolis
20	Celadon Trucking Services Inc.	Indianapolis

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**The Indiana Chamber of Commerce has been the state's largest broad-based business advocacy organization for 85 years. Today, it serves more than 26,000 members and customers.**