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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**June 11, 2008**

**Coalesce Honored by Chamber as ‘Rising Star’ Business**

*APPLETON, Wis.* – Coalesce Marketing & Design, Inc., a strategic marketing and communications agency in Appleton, today was awarded with the 2008 Rising Star Award from the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

The award is presented annually to an “up and coming” small entrepreneurial firm that has been in business less than five years, but has demonstrated early success and promise for continued growth. Selection criteria include a demonstrated record of financial achievements; uniqueness of services, management style, philosophy and business structure; and community service, as well as an innovative business plan with creative strategy.

“The Rising Star Award recognizes that starting a business requires a unique blend of vision, energy, perseverance and skill,” says Jim Schlies, vice president of economic development for the chamber. “It is awarded to ventures that have demonstrated a promising start, exhibiting the potential for a prosperous future.”

Coalesce was presented the award at the June 11 Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year Award Luncheon, with more than 500 business owners, staff members and other community supporters in attendance.

“Coalesce is honored to receive the 2008 recognition, and we give thanks to our team of talented employees, as well as to each of our clients who put their trust and confidence in us as their business partner,” says Lisa Piikkila, co-owner and creative director for the agency. “We will strive to make our upcoming years as solid and rewarding as the first four years, keeping our core business value, and the very definition of Coalesce in mind, which is to grow, together, with our clients, our employees and our community.”

In business for four years, Coalesce’s client roster has greatly expanded to include a range of business-to-business and business-to-consumer organizations, from global manufacturing firms to national trade organizations, from within the New North region, and across the United States. Coalesce has also grown from an agency of two, with an office space of 600 square feet, to a team of 12 graphic designers, account managers, business development and public relations professionals, extending the agency office to more than 5,000 square feet.

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“When we set out to open Coalesce, our top management goal was to foster an environment where people can feel good about what they do everyday,” says Michelle Richard, co-owner and operations director for the agency. “We wanted to create a company with purpose and passion because when our employees are enriched at work, our team is stronger, producing thoughtful, inspired work for our clients.”

### **About Coalesce**

Founded in 2004 by owners Michelle Richard and Lisa Piikkila, Coalesce provides a full range of strategic marketing and communications services to client businesses and organizations.

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