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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Coalesce Named Wisconsin's 2009 Emerging Small Business of the Year

APPLETON, Wis. – Lisa Piikkila, co-owner and creative director, and Michelle Richard, co-owner and director of operations, for Coalesce, Inc., were recently recognized by the U.S. Small Business Administration as Wisconsin small business leaders, announcing Coalesce as Wisconsin's 2009 Emerging Small Business of the Year.

The Emerging Small Business award is presented annually to an entrepreneurial firm that has been in business less than ten years, with fewer than 25 employees and has a demonstrated record of consistent growth in both employees and sales, innovativeness in products or services, response to adversity and a commitment to community service.

"The small business awards play an important part in our efforts to provide recognition and thanks to people and organizations that are critical to the success of Wisconsin's business climate," says Eric Ness, district director for the U.S. Small Business Administration. "Coalesce was selected among Wisconsin's finest examples of dynamic participants in the small business community."

The award will be formally presented at the twenty-fourth annual Small Business Awards breakfast to be held on June 5, 2009 at the Country Springs Hotel in Waukesha, Wisconsin.

"As business owners of a relatively young firm, Lisa and I have benefited from a tremendous support network among Wisconsin's greater business community, and we are truly honored to be recognized among our peers," says Richard. "Further, we are grateful for the State's recognition of the value small businesses bring to the stability, growth and prosperity of our region's economy."

In business for five 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 graphic designers, account managers, business development and public relations professionals, expanding the agency office walls to more than 5,000 square feet.



“We take pause to celebrate this tremendous honor,” says Piikkila, “yet our sights are focused ahead – on positioning for a solid future – while ensuring we remain true to our core business value, and the very definition of Coalesce, which is to grow, together, with our clients, our employees and our community.”

Coalesce’s commitment to community service was a key factor in receiving its emerging small business award status, having dedicated significant work and committee presence to New North, Inc.; Rebuilding Together Fox Valley; AAF-Fox River Ad Club; PULSE Young Professionals Network; Downtown Appleton Children’s Parade and Harbor House. In addition, Coalesce has donated pro bono efforts to a range of other regional and community organizations, including: American Red Cross; Big Brothers/Big Sisters Fox Valley; Habitat for Humanity; Green Bay Botanical Gardens; Best Friends of Neenah/Menasha and Fox Cities Marathon.

About Coalesce, Inc.

Founded in 2004 by owners Michelle Richard and Lisa Piikkila, Coalesce, Inc. is a Wisconsin-certified Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE), providing a full range of strategic marketing and communications services to client businesses and organizations. Coalesce is the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industries 2008 Rising Star Award winner.

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