

Ward Lumber of Northern New York wins NLBMDA's 2003 Award for Excellence in Human Resources *For over 50 employees*

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[**Washington, DC**]— The National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association (NLBMDA) announced today that Ward Lumber with locations in Jay, Plattsburgh, Malone, and Saranac Lake, New York, was the winner of its 2003 Award for Excellence in Human Resources for companies with over 50 employees. **Mary Rankin, Manager of Public Relations and Advertising** and former human resources assistant will accept the award on behalf of the employees of Ward Lumber on Friday, October 10 during NLBMDA's 2003 Industry Summit at the Hyatt Grand Champions in Indian Wells, Calif.

NLBMDA's Industry Summit is attended by 200 of the industry's top movers and shakers. The industry's Award for Excellence in Human Resources was first developed and presented at NLBMDA's Industry Summit in 1996. It was designed to reward and recognize building material dealers that had created *a corporate culture that develops outstanding people and sets a national standard in our industry for human resources excellence*. According to Rick Baumgarten, 2003 Chair of NLBMDA, "Ward Lumber is an exemplary example for our industry to follow. I look forward to making this award presentation and giving the industry an opportunity to learn about Ward's innovative programs."

NLBMDA receives nominations for this award in two categories, over fifty employees and under fifty employees. Nominees that are interested in competing for this award must submit a detailed application that helps a subcommittee of judges rate the nominees based on four main criteria: 1) Corporate Culture—mission, vision, values; 2) Identifying, Hiring, and Retaining Outstanding People—orientation, rewards and recognition, communication, benefits, etc.; 3) Institutionalized Training—dedication to training 12 months out of the year and a strong commitment to safety; and 4) Teaching Profit—helping all employees understand the concept of profit, who benefits, and how important profit is to the company's ability to develop its employees and support its community. The subcommittee is comprised of large and small building material dealer owners, human resource and safety professionals, and it varies every year.

Vicki Worden, NLBMDA Vice President, stated, "The competition gets tougher each year—and that's part of what makes this award great. Each year, competing companies and others all over the country have the opportunity to learn from the winner, give them a call, visit the facility, or simply talk with them during our annual meeting."

Sidney "Jay" Ward, Jr., President of Ward Lumber and Jim Rushia, VP of Human Resources, developed Ward Lumber's human resources program. "We are extremely honored to be recognized by NLBMDA and the industry. We are very proud of our people and pleased to have this opportunity to further recognize our outstanding team."

The winner of NLBMDA's 2003 Award for Excellence in Human Resources for under 50 employees is Dixie Lumber Co. in Easley, South Carolina. To obtain a news release on this company's award selection, contact NLBMDA at 800-634-8645 or visit our website at www.dealer.org.

About Ward Lumber **www.wardlumber.com**

Ward Lumber was founded in 1890 by Harvey M. Ward who entered the forest product industry in the AuSable River Valley of the Adirondacks. His sons, Amos, Ralph, Harry, Sidney and Harvey later ran the business with him.

Sidney J. Ward Sr., who became owner of the business in 1944, also established a retail operation that sold lumber and building materials to the surrounding area. Thru the years, Sid also had the foresight to purchase over 5,000 acres of timberland, which is still owned by the Company today. These lands provide 5% of the logs needed to operate the sawmill on an annual basis. Ward Lumber operates one of the largest white pine sawmill and planning mills in New York State, processing nearly 10 million board feet of lumber a year.

Ward Lumber has grown over the years to become a highly integrated operation including three retail building supply locations, timberlands, millwork shop and a wholesale lumber manufacturing facility including a sawmill, dry kiln, and planning mill, delivery fleet, and maintenance facility. Ward Lumber sells everything to build a home from the foundation to the finish, except furniture.

Ward Lumber is one of the largest employers in Essex County where its retail locations in Jay and Saranac Lake are located as well as the lumber manufacturing division. Ward employs 160 talented, highly trained and valued team members, including 128 full time and 32 part time.

This year, Ward Lumber celebrates its 113th year and, according to Jay Ward, "We owe this history to the great men and women who have worked here for generations. We recognize that the continued success of Ward Lumber depends on the success of our team and we strive for excellence in human resources every day." Ward Lumber is a proud member of NLBMDA and the Northeastern Retail Lumber Assn.

About NLBMDA

The National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association represents 6,000 independent lumber and building material companies with over 400,000 employees, 32 manufacturers and service providers to the building material industry, and twenty state and multi-state building material associations. NLBMDA's membership reaches every state and congressional district in the nation, and includes alliances with association counterparts and manufacturers in Canada. More information is available at www.dealer.org.