

**For Immediate Release**

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**Pittsburgh 2010 ATHENA Award Finalists Announced**

*Recipient to be honored at 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon on Monday, September 20*

(Pittsburgh, PA – Tuesday, August 10, 2010) The results are in – six of the Pittsburgh region’s prominent women leaders have been named 2010 Greater Pittsburgh ATHENA Award finalists. They will be recognized for their professional excellence, contributions to the community and mentorship of other women at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ATHENA Award Program Luncheon, presented by the Allegheny Conference on Community Development on Monday, September 20, at the Westin Convention Center Hotel. There, one finalist will become the 2010 ATHENA Award recipient.

Last year’s luncheon drew more than 800 attendees – securing the Greater Pittsburgh ATHENA Award Luncheon’s status as one of the largest stand-alone events of its kind in the world, among more than 500 communities across the globe that present the award each year.

The 2010 finalists, selected among 39 impressive nominees, compose a varied and distinguished group; each woman using her leadership to create professional excellence and positive regional impact. They are:

- Honorable Cathy Bissoon, U.S. Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court of the Western District of Pennsylvania
- Eva Tansky Blum, Senior Vice President & Director of Community Affairs, PNC Bank; Chair & President, The PNC Foundation
- Suzan M. Lami, Principal, Lami Grubb Architects, LP
- Laurie Z. MacDonald, Executive Director, Womansplace, Inc.
- Melissa Murphy, Senior Vice President of Corporate Affairs & Human Resources, StarKist Co.
- Bernadette Eyler Smith, Senior Vice President & Senior Portfolio Manager, Fifth Third Bank

“It was quite a challenge for the Selection Committee to choose finalists from such a remarkable pool of nominees. But, these six women ultimately stood out. Their professional accomplishments, their service to our community and their contributions to the development of our next generation of women leaders are truly inspirational. Each is a wonderful example of what the ATHENA Award is all about. It’s an honor to recognize them as finalists,” said Mary Ann Dunham, Shareholder at Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney, PC, chair of this year’s ATHENA Award Selection Committee and the 2009 ATHENA Award recipient.

“It’s a privilege to recognize our community’s instrumental women leaders every year, but having watched our ATHENA Award luncheon grow from 100 to 800 attendees and arrive at our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary stronger than ever, is a landmark accomplishment,” said Barbara McNees, president of the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, an affiliate of the Allegheny Conference. “We look forward to not only honoring the 2010 finalists, but also to celebrating our distinguished two-decade legacy through recognizing past ATHENA Award recipients and hosting Martha Mayhood Mertz, the founder of ATHENA International, as our keynote speaker,” she said.

**Tickets for the luncheon can be purchased online at [www.ATHENA-Pittsburgh.com](http://www.ATHENA-Pittsburgh.com).**

The 2010 recipient, chosen by a 13-member selection committee based on criteria developed by ATHENA

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International ([www.athenainternational.org](http://www.athenainternational.org)), will receive a 14-inch, hand-cast bronze sculpture; a diamond ATHENA pendant; and a trip to next year's ATHENA International Conference in Chicago. The award is named after the Greek goddess of strength and wisdom, traits considered when reviewing the nominations.

The Greater Pittsburgh ATHENA Award Program is made possible by support from the Eden Hall Foundation, EQT Corporation, UPMC Health Plan, PNC, *Pittsburgh Magazine*, FedEx Ground, Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC, Sisterson & Co. LLP, Don's Appliances, *Pittsburgh Business Times* and WTAE TV.

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**The Allegheny Conference on Community Development and its Affiliates** – the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Economy League of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance – work in collaboration with public and private sector partners to stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania. Learn more at [www.alleghenyconference.org](http://www.alleghenyconference.org).