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**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **TOP 'TEER Recognizes Outstanding Volunteering Efforts By Five Chicago Small Businesses**

### **Five Companies Demonstrate Leadership By Pouring Hearts and Souls into the Community**

**PALATINE, Ill.** – After asking dozens of nonprofits for their input on small businesses that volunteer their time and efforts to make a big impact on the community, Teer1 applauds these five leaders in employee volunteering for 2012 as TOP 'TEER companies:

- **Avalon Salon and Day Spa:** Making people feel better about themselves while making the community better.
- **FONA [Flavors of North America] International:** Volunteerism flavored by doing the right thing.
- **Norcon, a Chicago-based general contractor:** Fifty employees concentrating on one great nonprofit.
- **Primera, an engineering firm in Chicago:** Volunteering to rejuvenate Chicago's communities.
- **Rose Paving:** Paving the way to make volunteering a growing concern.

TOP 'TEER is an annual designation that celebrates Chicago's small businesses that have made an outstanding volunteering impact in their communities. It is sponsored by Teer1, a consultancy that helps companies to create a solid foundation for employee volunteering.

"While big companies are able to receive recognition for their volunteering because of their size and marketing machinery, small companies pour their heart and soul into their communities, but without the same kind of acknowledgement," explains Tim Padgett, a founding partner of Teer1. "The TOP 'TEER recognition program is a way to give credit to small businesses that have employee volunteer programs so good that they set examples for other companies.

"We've found that the volunteering programs these companies have built are outstanding for small businesses. They are deeply involved and have developed meaningful partnerships with charitable organizations, helping these nonprofits move toward their goals."

One common thread that binds these five companies is that they have developed key methods to sustain a vibrant on-going volunteer program. Some of their best practices:

- At Avalon Spa, “our mission to give back is framed on our walls in the Salon. It is written in our employee handbook, and it is discussed during the interview process,” said owner Bonnie Conte.
- “FONA has a program called ‘Mission 100’ where we have executives who serve on the boards or committees of various nonprofits,” said Lindsey Clark, Benefits Specialist. “They are able to develop a wide range of management skills while serving the community.”
- Norcon will “encourage staff members to get involved in other organizations individually,” said Jeff Jozwiak, Principal at Norcon. “We support a variety of charities throughout the year. And, we allow staff to participate on committees and other charitable activities during work hours.”
- Primera recruits volunteers through word of mouth, intranet postings and flyers—then organizes volunteers over company-sponsored lunch meetings (with lunch provided) to coordinate efforts, describe work and show slide shows of previous volunteer days, said Lourdes Gonzalez, Senior Vice President at Primera.
- Rose Paving has “taken incremental strides every year, especially in the past two years, to increase participation, raise more money and provide greater impact in our community as an organization,” said Fred Coleman, Senior Regional Project Manager. “We look to increase the amount of participation by 10 to 15 percent every year.”

“Great local nonprofit organizations such as Clearbook, the Northern Illinois Food Bank, Windy City Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding Together \* Metro Chicago and Ronald McDonald House affirmed that these TOP ‘TEER companies have made a real difference in people’s lives,” Padgett said. “The TOP ‘TEERs in turn confirmed that their volunteering programs make a real difference in their bottom lines as well as their communities.”

#### **About TOP ‘TEER**

TOP ‘TEER is an annual designation that celebrates Chicago’s small businesses (15 to 1000 employees) that have made the greatest local volunteering impact in their communities.

These companies have developed structured and sustainable employee volunteer programs that encourage employees to be the best ‘teers they can be. Teer1 established the TOP ‘TEER distinction to applaud and endorse these programs and to discover and champion the best of their best practices. For more information, visit [TopTeer.com](http://TopTeer.com).

#### **About Teer1**

Teer1 is a consultancy that helps companies to create a solid foundation for employee volunteering. We license a software platform that lets users can encourage, manage and leverage volunteering activities. Employees maximize charitable impact and personal satisfaction, while companies receive substantial ROI. For more information, visit [Teer1.com](http://Teer1.com).

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