



For Immediate Release

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Okuma & Gosiger Named Supplier of the Year by the National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind

Charlotte, NC (July 12, 2010) – The National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind (NAEPB) has named Okuma America Corporation and Gosiger, Inc. as their Supplier of the Year. Okuma and Gosiger were nominated by The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. in recognition of their outstanding efforts to provide accessible CNC machines as well as training for blind operators. The award is presented annually to a supplier that has provided quality



Brian Sides-Director of Engineering (Okuma), Kirk Adams-President and CEO (Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind), Pat O'Hara-GM of Operations (Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind), Pat Ofenloch (Gosiger, Inc.)

products or services to agencies supporting and employing blind individuals, while meeting stringent customer demands.

Okuma, through distributor Gosiger, Inc. provides Seattle Lighthouse with CNC machining centers. These machining centers utilize The Intelligent Numeric Control (THINC), a Windows™-based, open architecture control, equipped with a specially designed API that allows the use of JAWS screen-reading software. This software provides voice commands from the machine tool, allowing blind operators to program, set-up, run and changeover the machines.

Kirk Adams, President and CEO of Lighthouse for the Blind notes, "We were looking for a partner who would really work with us. A company that could provide the best machining equipment on the market but also one with the commitment to making it accessible for blind machinists. Okuma has been that partner and more. We have been able to create 8 jobs now that were not accessible in the past."

Seattle Lighthouse utilizes Okuma vertical machining centers and a horizontal machining center with a Fastems pallet system to provide parts for The Boeing Company and other customers. Operator Loren Schleppey states that the Okuma machines "have opened the door for the blind community", as he refers to the increased accessibility to the machines.

Okuma America Corporation

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In addition to machine tools, Seattle Lighthouse purchased a control simulator from Gosiger and Okuma. Machine Shop Supervisor, Tom McCrary wrote a tutorial to run on the simulator, allowing operators to train to run the machines without having to use production time to do so.

The Okuma machines have allowed the machine shop at Seattle Lighthouse to add value for their customers by making them more price competitive and able to meet quality and delivery requirements. All while providing high-paid jobs to blind individuals.

About Okuma America Corporation:

Okuma America Corporation is the US based affiliate of Okuma Corporation, a world leader in the development of computer numeric controls (CNC) and machining technology, founded in 1898 in Nagoya, Japan. Known for its technology leadership and world-class manufacturing, product quality and dedication to customer service, Okuma strives to be the machine tool solution provider to manufacturers worldwide. For more information, visit www.okuma.com

About Gosiger, Inc.:

For over 80 years Gosiger has been helping American manufacturers maximize productivity through equipment, application experience and exceptional service. Headquartered in Dayton, OH, Gosiger operates 15 facilities in 15 states.

About NAEPB.:

The Mission of The National Association for the Employment of People Who Are Blind is to represent and protect the collective interest of its member organizations to enable them to strengthen and maximize opportunities for people who are blind. It is a membership association of agencies from across the United States who share the common goal of providing employment for people who are blind. It was founded in November of 2001 in Dallas, Texas. For more information, visit www.naepb.org.

About Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind:

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) social enterprise dedicated to generating opportunities for independence and self-sufficiency for adults who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities, through a comprehensive range of training programs and career development opportunities. We create meaningful employment as well as products and services of outstanding quality, offering access to adaptive technology and the accommodations necessary for success.

While manufacturing operations are self-funded, The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. relies on community support to fund training programs and support services to adults who are blind, Deaf-Blind and blind with other disabilities. Philanthropic contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, and service organizations are channeled through the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation, whose sole purpose is to raise money and create awareness in order to help us expand opportunities beyond what is possible through the sale of our products and services alone. For more information, visit www.seattleighthouse.org.

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