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New SJF Report Links Employee Engagement to Better Business Performance

Ten Great People Practices That Help Companies Thrive

DURHAM, N.C. – July 21, 2011 – SJF Institute’s new report, “*Employees Matter: Maximizing Company Value Through Workforce Engagement*,” profiles two dozen fast growing entrepreneurial firms that utilize employee ownership and engagement strategies which their executives say are closely linked with improved business performance. The report uses these company profiles to frame and illustrate ten best practices for engaging employees at all levels for increased business success.

“We chose companies that are less known but that have great stories to tell about how they engage all team members for maximum business success,” said Anne Claire Broughton, SJF Institute Senior Director and author of the report. “These strategies are of critical importance with today’s well-informed, creative workforce.”

The companies profiled in *Employees Matter* represent a range of sectors and geographies across the United States. They range from 50 to 3,500 employees and have average revenues of \$35 million. Seven are venture backed, and all but three have entry-level employees. All of the companies profiled have low employee turnover and very high customer satisfaction rates and strong year-to-year customer retention. Ten of them describe ways that employee engagement practices directly helped them survive and sometimes even thrive during the recession.

Among the companies featured in the report are Advanced Circuits, Better World Books, CleanScapes, Dancing Deer Baking Co., Full Sail Brewing Co., Namaste Solar, PrintingForLess.com, Red Door Interactive, Redwoods Group, SmartPak Equine, Southern Energy Management, and Tweezerman.

Two top employee engagement strategies detailed in *Employees Matter* are communicating the company’s core values clearly and consistently and sharing ownership broadly via stock options, restricted stock, ESOPs, or co-ops.

“When team members understand their company’s core values, they can be empowered to act quickly and make good decisions,” Broughton explained. “And when employees think and act like owners, they provide better customer service and find every possible way to build company value.”

The full report is available electronically on the SJF Institute website at www.employeesmatter.org, and hard copy reports can be purchased at www.Amazon.com.

About SJF Institute

SJF Institute connects, inspires and accelerates impact entrepreneurs and the fields that support them. SJF empowers companies that provide green solutions and builds workplaces where employees can grow and thrive. SJF Ventures is an affiliated venture capital fund focused on investments in high-growth, positive impact companies. Investors' Circle is an affiliated nonprofit network of over 150 angel investors, professional venture capitalists, foundations and family offices using private capital to promote the transition to a sustainable economy. www.sjfinstitute.org ###