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***Press Release***

***For Immediate Release***

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## **HMF Wins Stephen E. Barton Leadership & Culture Award**

Newport Beach, California – December 8, 2009 – The Supplier Excellence Alliance (SEA) presented the prestigious Stephen E. Barton Leadership & Culture Award to Hixson Metal Finishing during their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Awards Gala on November 11, 2009 at the Hyatt Grand Champions Resort and Villas in Indian Wells, California.

The 3rd Annual Aerospace & Defense Industry Supply Chain Awards recognized the performance and leadership contributions of small- to mid-sized supplier companies. Awards were announced at a black-tie gala attended by award finalists and hundreds of supplier and prime tier-one company executives. Looking very much like an Academy Awards ceremony, award presentations followed a reception and gala dinner and executives from supplier companies, primes, and tier-one contractors served as presenters for seven award categories.

The Stephen E. Barton Leadership & Culture Award recognizes companies for their commitment to development of excellence in leadership processes. This commitment is evaluated on the basis of four key metrics: methodology of organizing and accomplishing strategic goals, communication and reinforcement of company direction by senior leaders, methodology of organizational performance review, and the methodology of selection, prioritization, and review of improvement initiatives. Nominees are reviewed anonymously by an impartial panel of judges comprised of former SCORE members and industry professionals.

Hixson Metal Finishing is a premier processor of steel, aluminum, bronze, brass and copper parts and components as well as their associated alloys for the military, defense, aerospace, and commercial aircraft industries. They provide over 85 individual and combined finishing processes to beautify, protect, and enhance the performance of forged, cast, and machined parts for all of the major prime contractors. Today, they are just a handful of metal finishers in America that provides the full scope of complete “one stop” processing for their industries, with numerous Tier 1 suppliers and over 3,000 customers from every state in America and from as far away as the Philippines.

SEA (Supplier Excellence Alliance) is an unprecedented aerospace and defense alliance led by sub-tier suppliers committed to accelerating supply chain performance. SEA provides a proven turnkey system for supplier development targeted to mid-tier aerospace and defense customers and provides an industry voice for suppliers on issues affecting supply chain performance. SEA also provides a platform for supplier visibility, performance improvement and collaboration.