

# COMMERCE NEWS

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## **THREE TO RECEIVE PRESIDENTIAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**

**WASHINGTON** – President George W. Bush and Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez today announced three organizations as recipients of the 2006 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, the nation’s highest Presidential honor for organizational performance excellence.

The 2006 Baldrige Award recipients are:

- MESA Products, Inc., Tulsa, Okla. (small business)
- Premier, Inc., San Diego, Calif. (service)
- North Mississippi Medical Center, Tupelo, Miss. (health care)

“President Bush and I applaud the three 2006 recipients of the prestigious Baldrige Award. With their innovative practices, commitment to excellence and outstanding results, these organizations are among America’s best and are role models for any organization striving for world-class performance,” said Gutierrez. “The Baldrige Award has grown in stature and is respected and emulated around the world.”

The 2006 Baldrige Award recipients were selected from among 76 applicants. All of the applicants were evaluated rigorously by an independent board of examiners in seven areas: leadership; strategic planning; customer and market focus; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; human resource focus; process management; and results. The evaluation process for the 2006 Baldrige Award recipients included about 1,000 hours of review and an on-site visit by teams of examiners to clarify questions and verify information in the applications.

The 2006 Baldrige Award recipients are expected to be presented with their award in a ceremony in Washington, D.C., early next year.

Named after Malcolm Baldrige, the 26th Secretary of Commerce, the Baldrige Award was established by Congress in 1987 to enhance the competitiveness and performance of U.S. businesses and expanded in 1998 to include education and health care. In 2007, non-profit organizations, including charities, trade and professional associations, and government agencies,

will be eligible to receive a Baldrige Award. The award promotes excellence in organizational performance, recognizes the achievements and results of U.S. organizations, and publicizes successful performance strategies. The award may be presented to five types of organizations: manufacturers, service companies, small businesses, education organizations and health care organizations. The award is not given for specific products or services. Since 1988, 67 organizations have received Baldrige Awards.

The Baldrige program is managed by NIST in conjunction with the private sector.

As a non-regulatory agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Administration, NIST promotes U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve our quality of life.

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