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**Board of Directors Network Recognizes J. Veronica Biggins
With 2011 Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Award**

ATLANTA, Oct. 21, 2011 –Board of Directors Network (BDN) announced that J. Veronica Biggins is this year’s recipient of its Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Award. Biggins, who currently serves on the corporate boards of Avnet, Inc .(NYSE:AVT) and Southwest Airlines Company (NYSE:LUV) and the trustee boards of the Savannah College of Art and Design and the Woodruff Arts Center, was presented with the award last night at BDN’s Annual Study and Awards Dinner at the Renaissance Atlanta Midtown Hotel in Atlanta.

Now in its ninth year, the Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Award, sponsored by KPMG LLP, recognizes women who have made outstanding corporate contributions at the board level, in their communities, and in helping other women achieve their full potential in the business world.

“Veronica Biggins had a mission when she graduated from Spelman College, which was ‘to make a difference, to stand tall, and to tower over mediocrity’,” said Ann-Marie McGaughey, BDN President. “She has certainly accomplished that in her own career, in the boardroom and as an advocate for women in the business community and professional world.”

The award is presented annually in honor of Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans, one of the first women to serve as a director of a major American corporation. She was appointed to the board of directors of The Coca-Cola Company in 1934 and held the position for nearly 20 years.

Biggins is currently Managing Director at Diversified Search, one of the largest women-owned executive search firms in the United States, and was recently named the lead for their Board of Directors Practice. Before that, she was Senior Partner and Head of Diversity for Heidrick & Struggles, a leadership solutions firm based in Atlanta.

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Biggins previously served as Assistant to the President of the United States and Director of Presidential Personnel under President Bill Clinton. She was responsible for selecting and hiring all political appointees and worked directly with the President on appointments at all levels of the administration, including the placement of agency heads, ambassadors, and members of presidential boards and commissions. She also served as Vice Chairman of the U.S. Delegation to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, and was Chairman of the Czech-Slovak American Enterprise Development Fund.

Biggins' background also includes more than 20 years of banking experience with NationsBank (now Bank of America) and its predecessor, the Citizens Southern National Bank, where she served as Executive Vice President for Corporate Community Relations.

Additionally, Biggins has been recognized by several organizations for her career achievements. She was named by *Georgia Trend* magazine as one of the "100 most influential Georgians" and to *Ebony's List* of the 100 Best and Brightest Black Women. She received a Points of Light Award for her leadership of the Czech-Slovak American Enterprise Development Fund, as well as one of the Twenty-five for the Twenty first Century awards from the Governor of Georgia. She also has been recognized as a Woman of Achievement by the YWCA of Atlanta and New York City, and received the Kaufman Award for Outstanding Community Service from the Atlanta Chapter of the NAACP. She is married to the Honorable Franklin N. Biggins, retired Judge and has two daughters Dawn and Kenzie.

About BDN

The Board of Directors Network, Inc. (BDN) is a nonprofit advocacy organization that seeks to increase the number of women on corporate boards and in executive leadership. BDN works collaboratively and confidentially with corporations and other key influencers of the director selection process to identify women for their boards of directors. For more information, please call BDN at 770-489-6689. <http://www.boarddirectorsnetwork.org>.

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