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**GEP PHILLY, THE CITY'S LEADING DESTINATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY,  
NAMED TO THE PHILADELPHIA 100® AS ONE OF THE REGION'S  
FASTEST GROWING PRIVATELY-HELD COMPANIES**

**PHILADELPHIA (October 5, 2007)** – Michael J. Lyons, DMCP President and CEO of GEP Philly, the city's leading destination management company, announced that the firm has been recognized as one of the fastest growing, privately held companies in the 10-county Philadelphia region, and has been named to the Philadelphia 100®. Based in Center City, GEP Philly specializes in the design and full-service management of group events, from extravagant themed receptions and dine-around programs to airport meet-and-greet services and targeted team-building projects. This marks the second time in the company's five-year history that GEP Philly has been named a member of the Philadelphia 100®; previously, in 2005, GEP Philly was ranked #22.

As a professional destination management company, GEP Philly boasts extensive local knowledge, resources and expertise, and is actively involved in promoting the city of Philadelphia as a meetings destination. Since its inception in 2002, the 10-person firm has planned and overseen hundreds of events and thousands of logistics for medical, pharmaceutical, financial and meeting planning companies, as well as nonprofit institutions. In March of 2007, GEP Philly was named the top event planner in the Philadelphia region by the *Philadelphia Business Journal*.

The company has recorded an 800 percent increase in revenue growth since its start in 2002, while winning awards from industry organizations for their professionalism and creativity. Most recently in May, 2007 the International Special Events Society awarded GEP Philly the Liberty Award for Best Corporate Event of the Year. And in 2006, the Philadelphia Chapter of Meeting Professionals International named Michael J. Lyons, DMCP its Supplier of the Year.

This year in particular, GEP Philly grew its business by establishing on-site offices at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown and the Loews Philadelphia Hotel, marking the first time a DMC in Philadelphia has opened a satellite office in an area hotel. By setting up shop directly where customers stay, GEP Philly has been able to offer enhanced on-site event planning and management services to association, corporate and convention clients hosting meetings at two of Philadelphia's largest hotels.

In addition to being good for the customers and the hotels, the on-site shops are good business for GEP Philly and its suppliers. "We've seen a substantial increase in business from our on-site hotel relationships as a result of the direct client access, referrals and increased awareness of DMC services. And our increased business creates a terrific trickledown economic impact for others in the hospitality industry as we contract with transportation companies, restaurants, venues, caterers, musicians, florists, and other providers," Lyons said.

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To give back to the City of Brotherly Love, GEP Philly produced a major fundraising event on August 8, 2007 to benefit Paine's Park Project, the city's new skateboard venue to be located along the Schuylkill River Trail. GEP rallied more than 500 of Philadelphia's hospitality industry partners, business associates and community leaders, and in total, \$22,000 was raised in support of Paine's capital campaign.

GEP Philly will be honored at the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Philadelphia 100® Awards Dinner and Ceremony, October 25, 2007, from 5:30 – 9:00 p.m. at The Sheraton Philadelphia – Center City. This year's event is hosted by the Entrepreneurs Forum of Greater Philadelphia, Wharton Small Business Development Center (Wharton SBDC) and the Philadelphia Business Journal.

For more information about GEP Philly, visit [www.gepphilly.com](http://www.gepphilly.com). To find out more about the Philadelphia 100®, please go to [www.Philadelphia100.com](http://www.Philadelphia100.com).

### **ABOUT GEP PHILLY**

GEP Philly, based in Center City, Philadelphia, is a full-service destination management company (DMC) specializing in the design and management of group events. Services include airport meet-and-greet services, group tours, spouse programs, entertainment, themed receptions and dinners, team-building programs and complete VIP services for corporations, associations, incentive travel and non-profit institutions.

GEP Philly is a member of Global Events Partners, a network of destination management companies selected for their exemplary service and reputation. Established in 1998, GEP consists of 70 of the top DMCs around the world, all providing the ultimate in customer service and efficient administration of event design and execution.

GEP Philly is housed in the Phoenix Building at 1600 Arch Street, Philadelphia. For more information, visit [www.gepphilly.com](http://www.gepphilly.com) or call 267-514-2727.

### **ABOUT THE PHILADELPHIA 100®**

The Philadelphia 100® was founded in 1988 to publicly identify, recognize and promote young successful companies in the Greater Philadelphia region, and is a meritorious designation based on verifiable revenue growth as reported on federal tax forms or audited financial statements. This year's event is hosted by the Entrepreneurs Forum of Greater Philadelphia, Wharton Small Business Development Center and the Philadelphia Business Journal, with gold sponsor Reed Smith; Sabre Systems, Republic First Bank and Philadelphia Business Journal at the silver level; and bronze sponsors CBIZ, Citibank, Flaster/Greenberg, Rome Technology Ltd, Synnestvedt & Lechner LLP, Citibank and Verizon Wireless.

Last year's Philadelphia 100® boasted an average \$9.7 million in sales revenue and proved a strong catalyst for creating jobs for the region, employing an average 103 employees. Forty-eight companies on the list were repeat winners with nine of those recognized three or more times. Previously honored companies include NovaCare, Forman Mills, ATX, Mothers Work, Urban Outfitters, Kremer Laser Eye Center, Egglund's Best and NeatReceipts, among others.

To find out more about the Philadelphia 100®, please go to [www.Philadelphia100.com](http://www.Philadelphia100.com).