

For immediate release



HKMB International Insurance Brokers Sponsors The Directors College

TORONTO, March 7, 2005 – HKMB International Insurance Brokers is pleased to announce the signing of a program sponsorship agreement with The Directors College*, a joint venture of The Conference Board of Canada and the DeGroote School of Business at McMaster University.

As a program sponsor, HKMB will deliver exclusive course content in the area of risk management and provide course participants with a complementary quarterly newsletter focused on key insurance and personal risk management issues that directors face.

In announcing the sponsorship, Mr. Hawkrigg said, “We are proud to support Canada’s best director education program as part of our commitment to provide expert strategic guidance on risk management, optimization and insurance to boards around the world.”

HKMB is also pleased to announce that Managing Partner, John Hawkrigg will join the Advisory Board of The Directors College.

HKMB is Canada’s largest privately held international insurance broker with a written premium volume in excess of CDN\$200 million. With its Assurex Global partners, it forms the third largest broker in the world with premiums exceeding US\$19 billion. HKMB is a recognized leader in the field of Directors’ & Officers’ insurance, both in the profit and not-for-profit sector.

“We are pleased to welcome HKMB as a program sponsor of The Directors College,” said Dr. Chris Bart, Principal and Lead Professor at The Directors College. “HKMB offers our director candidates a wealth of real world experience in understanding and mitigating the risks that boards and directors encounter.”

The Directors College is a comprehensive professional development and certification program for corporate directors. It is the only program of its kind in Canada that leads to formal university accreditation – the Chartered Director (C.Dir.)* designation.

“I am delighted to welcome HKMB to our national coalition,” says Anne Golden, President and CEO of The Conference Board of Canada. “Their sponsorship of The Directors College is strong testimony to the importance attached to director education and accreditation in the D&O insurance community, which plays a major role in setting standards for boardroom behaviour.”

Other program sponsors of The Directors College are The Caldwell Partners International, McCarthy Tétrault and NATIONAL Investor Relations. National sponsors are The TSX Group, Ernst & Young, the Society of Management Accountants of Canada (CMA Canada) and The Hay Group.

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For more information:

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* The Directors College, Chartered Director and C.Dir. are official marks of McMaster University.

About The Directors College

The Directors College is a joint venture of The Conference Board of Canada and the Michael G. DeGroote School of Business at McMaster University. The Directors College is a comprehensive professional development and certification program for corporate directors. It is the only program of its kind in Canada that leads to formal university accreditation - the Chartered Director (C.Dir.)* designation.

About The Conference Board of Canada

The Conference Board of Canada is the foremost independent, not-for-profit applied research organization in Canada. We help build leadership capacity for a better Canada by creating and sharing insights on economic trends, public policy issues, and organizational performance. Our members include a broad range of Canadian organizations from the public and private sectors. The Conference Board of Canada has an annual budget of \$30 million, with 200 staff located in Ottawa, and offices in Niagara-on-the-Lake and Toronto.

About McMaster University

McMaster University, one of Canada's top three research-intensive universities, has world-renowned faculty and state-of-the-art research facilities. McMaster's culture of innovation fosters a commitment to discovery and learning in teaching, research and scholarship. Based in Hamilton, the University has a student population of more than 20,000 and more than 108,000 alumni in more than 125 countries around the world. McMaster University's DeGroote School of Business is one of the leading business schools in Canada and internationally.