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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**April 4, 2007**

### **Cornerstone's People and Work – Formula for 25 Years**

The year was 1981. Sandra Day O'Connor became the first female justice of the U.S. Supreme Court; "Dynasty" debuted on ABC; Lady Diana Spencer married Charles, Prince of Wales; the first American test-tube baby was born; and Cornerstone, a Baltimore-based marketing communications firm, opened its doors. Twenty-five years later, Cornerstone is one of Baltimore's oldest continuous-ownership firms.

"The key to our longevity," owner and President Greg DesRoches asserts, "has been good work and good people." To commemorate the company's silver anniversary, the agency created an 88-page, wire-bound book to celebrate the many people, places and things that have contributed to the agency's 25 years of success. "Creating a book that tells the agency story – through the work and the people – seemed a fitting way to commemorate our first 25 years," DesRoches said.

The book includes a collection of print and outdoor ads, screen grabs of TV ads, and logo and collateral designs created by Cornerstone for past and present clients. These ads vividly demonstrate Cornerstone's philosophy of "Smart. Clean. Fresh. Period." communications.

The book also includes a short history of the agency, lists of all current and past employees and clients, and a 1994 *Baltimore Sun* Op-ed about the camel used in the Camel cigarette campaign. The

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Op-ed piece, written by DesRoches, appeared in many major metropolitan newspapers and *Advertising Age*. The agency has distributed 150 books to clients, friends of the agency, and community and business leaders.

Cornerstone was founded in 1981 by DesRoches, who left the National Security Agency after 16 years in a variety of management positions to join two Baltimore studio principals to create a new advertising agency – Cornerstone. Today, it is one of the oldest, continuous-ownership advertising firms headquartered in Baltimore. Because of his background as an employment director, DesRoches pursued recruitment advertising as a specialty. The firm continues to emphasize employer communications as a mainstay service today.

In 1983, DesRoches moved the company to the GreeneHouse, a refurbished 19th century garment factory in downtown Baltimore. The agency grew to four employees. Jack Hovey, who joined the company that same year as a designer, is still with the company and today serves as the agency’s design director.

During the 1980s, the advertising industry was vibrant. With a plethora of manufacturing and financial companies located in Baltimore and a bank on every corner, there was plenty of business for all of Baltimore’s ad shops. In 1983, Cornerstone was engaged by Columbia Builders, Inc., an emerging residential builder based in Howard County, Md. Twenty-three years later, Columbia Builders, now a solid regional industry leader, is still a client.

With the recession of the early 1990s, many advertising agencies merged, left town or closed their doors. Cornerstone survived by

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acquiring several accounts in Washington, D.C. and the surrounding suburbs, including Howard County – where business remained strong. The late 1990s brought the technology boom and Cornerstone, like many other agencies, landed several high tech clients. The work included a variety of business-to-business advertising, as well as branding assignments to help position these high-tech companies for public offerings.

In 1996, Cornerstone launched a Public Relations division, enabling the agency to further provide clients with integrated, multiplatform marketing communications.

Today, Cornerstone remains sharply focused on the philosophy of “Smart. Clean. Fresh. Period.” communications. Throughout its 25-year history, the firm and its people have garnered numerous awards and accolades including 112 Maryland ADDY Awards, 20 PRSA Best of Maryland Awards, 40 American Corporate Identity recognitions, “Best of Show” from the Advertising Association of Baltimore in 1996 and three national ADDYs, representative of America’s best consumer print and multimedia campaigns.

With a staff of 19, the firm has a wide range of clients and continues its award winning work through out the Mid-Atlantic region.

*Cornerstone is a full-service communications firm located in downtown Baltimore. Cornerstone provides comprehensive communications services, including advertising, corporate communications, external and internal brand development, public relations and strategic communications, to a variety of clients throughout the mid-Atlantic region. Cornerstone’s client roster includes businesses, non-profits and governmental organizations in the financial services, healthcare, residential development, hospitality, recruitment and technology industries.*