



UniFirst Wins Two 2017 Stevie Awards for Sales Training Programs

March 1, 2017

WILMINGTON, Mass., March 01, 2017 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- UniFirst (NYSE:UNF), an industry leader in the supply and servicing of uniforms, workwear, and facility service products throughout the U.S. and Canada, was presented with two Bronze Stevie® Awards in the Sales Training or Coaching Program of the Year category at the eleventh annual Stevie Awards for Sales and Customer Service. The awards were presented during a gala banquet on Friday, February 24, at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. More than 650 executives from around the world attended.

The Stevie Awards for Sales and Customer Service are the world's top honors for customer service, contact center, business development and sales professionals. The Stevie Awards organizes several of the world's leading business awards programs including the prestigious American Business AwardsSM and International Business AwardsSM.

The first of the two UniFirst bronze-winning nominations centered on the creation and implementation of a new customer retention program called Account Management Education (AME) that teaches strategies and tools necessary to proactively build relationships with customers. "UniFirst continually strives to optimize our customer retention percentages as part of our 'Customers for Life' philosophy," said Jeff Brandli, UniFirst sales training specialist. "Our location managers are among the best in the industry and we wanted to further enhance existing strategies with new and improved ways to strengthen customer relationships. In our first year of deployment, we noticed a marked improvement in customer retention—a direct reflection of program's success."

UniFirst's second bronze-winning entry was a new program the company developed to help the sales team improve telephone skills when talking to prospective customers. UniFirst created the Phone Skills Coaching Tool by tapping into existing technology resources to engage sales managers in automated "prompt and response" appointment setting attempts by telephone. "Developing successful telephone sales skills takes a great deal of practice," said Julia Davis, UniFirst sales training specialist. "We believed that helping our sales teams began with ensuring our sales managers were confident about their own skills. UniFirst found a creative solution to help our sales managers increase their confidence on the phone and get excited about coaching and developing their teams. We created a program that not only helps them get the practice they need, but also leverages our existing technology resources for maximum value and efficiency. We have seen major improvements in our sales managers' telephone skills along with an increase in appointments set by more than 90% when the practices are applied in the field."

More than 2,300 nominations from organizations of all sizes and in virtually every industry were evaluated in this year's competition, an increase of 10% over 2016. Finalists were determined by the average scores of 77 professionals worldwide, acting as preliminary judges. Entries were considered in 61 categories. More than 75 members of several specialized judging committees determined the Gold, Silver and Bronze Stevie Award placements from among the Finalists during final judging earlier this month. Finalists were determined by another 77 judges.

Details about the Stevie Awards for Sales & Customer Service and the list of Stevie winners in all categories are available at www.StevieAwards.com/sales.

About UniFirst

Headquartered in Wilmington, Mass., UniFirst Corporation (NYSE:UNF) is a North American leader in the supply and servicing of uniform and workwear programs, as well as the delivery of facility service programs. Together with its subsidiaries, the company also provides first aid and safety products, and manages specialized garment programs for the cleanroom and nuclear industries. UniFirst manufactures its own branded workwear, protective clothing, and floorcare products, and with over 240 service locations, 300,000 customer locations, and 13,000 employee Team Partners, the company outfits nearly 2 million workers each business day. For more information, contact UniFirst at 800.455.7654 or visit www.unifirst.com.

About The Stevie Awards

Stevie Awards are conferred in seven programs: the Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards, the German Stevie Awards, The American Business Awards, The International Business Awards, the Stevie Awards for Great Employers, the Stevie Awards for Women in Business and the Stevie Awards for Sales & Customer Service. Stevie Awards competitions receive more than 10,000 entries each year from organizations in more than 60 nations. Honoring organizations of all types and sizes and the people behind them, the Stevies recognize outstanding performances in the workplace worldwide. Learn more about the Stevie Awards at www.StevieAwards.com.

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