



**Charlotte, North Carolina—April 16, 2009:** Conterra Telecom Services' President, Chief Operating and Technology Officer, Dennis B. Francis, P.E., has been recognized by six Texas universities for his achievements and dedication to the field of Industrial Engineering with the first Life Time Achievement Award for Industrial Engineering jointly given by these institutions. The six Texas universities that presented this award to Mr. Francis are The University of Texas at Arlington, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, The University of Houston, The University of Texas at El Paso, and Lamar University.

Mr. Francis earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering from The University of Texas at Arlington, Texas (UTA) where he was President of the Industrial Engineering Honors Society, Alpha Pi Mu. He has also completed several graduate level executive programs including MIT's Center for Information Systems Research Program, the Georgetown University Strategic Business Leadership Program and the University of Texas at Dallas Executive Professional Coaching Program.

Mr. Francis' professional career accomplishments include more than 27 years of telecommunications experience with a focus on technology, operations, business and strategy. He has worked for several Fortune 500 companies as well as small, start-up business and technology firms, and has received several high level federal government advisory appointments. Mr. Francis served on the Executive Committee of President Bush's Advisory Council on National Telecommunications Security and is a past Chairman of the Cellular Telephone Industry Association's CTO Council. He has been a licensed professional engineer since 1989.

"As a long-time business colleague and friend, I am delighted to see Dennis receive such well earned recognition for his many accomplishments in advancing this country's wired and wireless telecommunications infrastructure and capabilities, particularly in underserved rural communities," commented Conterra's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Stephen Leeolou. "It is also fitting that this first-of-its-kind award was given by institutions of higher learning in the state of Texas, where Dennis' telecommunications career began and where our company today provides important services to rural school districts and other critical public service organizations in some very remote areas of such a geographically vast state," added Mr. Leeolou.

Mr. Francis currently oversees all of the day-to-day engineering, operations, sales and marketing of Conterra Telecom Services.

## **About Conterra Telecom Services**

Conterra Telecom Services, headquartered in Charlotte, NC, is a national provider of facilities-based broadband services for schools, wireless carriers and select enterprises that require bandwidth intensive, carrier-grade data, video and voice transport services primarily in outer suburban and rural markets.

Privately owned, Conterra was established by the founders and members of management of Vanguard Cellular Systems, Inc., which became one of the first and largest independent cellular companies in the United States. Started in 1982, Vanguard designed, built and operated its own point-to-point microwave transport systems to support wireless voice and data traffic within its cellular networks throughout the country which are now part of AT&T Wireless. For more information about Conterra, visit **[www.conterra.com](http://www.conterra.com)** or call: **704-936-1800**.

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