

FIRSTENERGY'S CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER SELECTED AS IMPORTANT BLACK PROFESSIONAL IN TECHNOLOGY

Akron, OH – Bennett L. Gaines, vice president, Information Technology/Corporate Security and chief information officer for Akron, Ohio-based FirstEnergy Corp. (NYSE: FE), was honored as one of the country's most influential black executives in technology by Career Communications, Inc., publisher of *US Black Engineer & IT Magazine*. The award was presented during ceremonies at the 22nd annual National Black Engineer of the Year Awards, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Global Competitiveness Conference held earlier this month in Baltimore, Md.

The annual event recognizes the achievements of the country's most successful African-Americans engineers, scientists and technology leaders in companies across America.

"Bennett Gaines has done an outstanding job at FirstEnergy of enhancing our wide-ranging Information Technology (IT) operations and we are very proud that his exceptional talents and skills are being recognized at such a high level," said Mark T. Clark, senior vice president, Strategic Planning & Operations, FirstEnergy.

"Throughout his career, Mr. Gaines has demonstrated outstanding leadership skills in all areas of IT services and telecommunications and network operations," said Tyrone D. Taborn, publisher and chief executive officer, of Career Communications Group. "His achievements have advanced the IT goals of FirstEnergy, and have served to expand the technical literacy within this country's black community as well."

At FirstEnergy, Mr. Gaines is responsible for the delivery of IT services, including the development of a corporate IT strategy and governance process, as well as the communications/data network.

Prior to joining FirstEnergy in 2006, he served as vice president and chief information officer at Cincinnati-based Cinergy Corporation and as managing director, Business Services, at Powergen plc in the United Kingdom, where he was responsible for the strategy and delivery of IT and other shared services. He also has served as corporate director, Supply Chain, for LG&E Energy Corp., in Louisville, Ky., a subsidiary of Powergen, and corporate director, Strategic Services, at EDS Corporation in Dallas, Texas, where he oversaw the strategic sourcing of all goods and services. In addition,

Mr. Gaines also has been employed by McKesson Corporation in Dallas, Texas, and San Francisco, Ca.; Hamilton-Hallmark Corporation in Philadelphia, Pa., and Phoenix, Ariz.; and IBM Corporation in Minnesota.

Mr. Gaines earned his bachelor of arts degree from Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio, and received a master of arts from the University of Phoenix. He has been involved in numerous civic and community organizations, including serving as a board member of Cincinnati-based Central Clinic and ProjectGrad Akron, in Akron, Ohio. In addition, he is a member of the Board of Trustees at Baldwin-Wallace College.

FirstEnergy is a diversified energy company headquartered in Akron, Ohio. Its subsidiaries and affiliates are involved in the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity, as well as energy management and other energy-related services. Its seven electric utility operating companies comprise the nation's fifth largest investor-owned electric system, based on 4.5 million customers served within a 36,100-square mile area of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New Jersey; and its generation subsidiaries control more than 14,000 megawatts of capacity.

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