

## HOWARD, MERRELL & PARTNERS

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Howard, Merrell & Partners Continues to Grow Online Communications Expertise

**Raleigh, N.C., February 16, 2010** – Howard, Merrell & Partners, strategic branding and advertising firm, continues to expand its expertise in interactive and social media marketing with the addition of two online communications professionals. Tara Maxwell joins the team as interactive producer and Karlie Justus as an associate account executive in social media marketing.

“More companies are turning to the Web as a necessary source for lead-generation and networking. As this growth continues, it is necessary for clients to stay ahead of the trend,” said Jim Cobb, president and CEO of Howard, Merrell & Partners. “Tara and Karlie join a team of professionals who provide our clients with innovative and effective strategies, and we are excited to continue to grow our online communications capabilities.”

Maxwell comes to the agency’s Interactive team with a strong background in Web development and project management. Previously with NBC-17/WNCN in Raleigh, she managed and led the development of large-scale news network and community Web sites, such as MyNC.com, NBC17.com and MyNCBlogs.com. Maxwell’s prior experience also includes project manager at McClatchy interactive and digital media professor at East Tennessee State University. Earning her undergraduate degree in computer science from the University of Virginia, Maxwell holds a master of science in technology from East Tennessee State University.

Prior to joining Howard, Merrell & Partners’ Social Media Marketing team, Justus was a public information officer for the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, including the North Carolina State Fair. Justus’ experience also includes arts and culture writing work for *The Independent Weekly* and blogging for country music site The 9513. Her active role in the social media community led her to be named by Wayne Sutton as one of 14 Triangle Social Media Professionals to Watch in 2010. Justus graduated *summa cum laude* from North Carolina State University.

### About Howard, Merrell & Partners

Raleigh, NC-based Howard, Merrell & Partners Inc., specializes in linking business and communications strategies to yield higher levels of financial performance for its clients. Founded by Jack Howard in 1945 and later reorganized as Howard, Merrell & Partners under Mac Merrell’s leadership, the agency is a pioneer in understanding and applying

the power of emotions to develop more effective business and communications strategies. Agency service offerings include brand development, creative development and production, consumer insight research, public relations, media asset services, event planning and management, social media, interactive services, Hispanic marketing and strategic planning.

Recent clients include BASF, Butterball, Canvas on Demand, Central Aquatics, CHD Meridian Healthcare, Cisco, Colonial Bank, Component Hardware Group, Doctors Vision Center, Georgia-Pacific Professional (Dixie<sup>®</sup> and enMotion<sup>®</sup>), Hewlett-Packard, Interton, INVISTA (CORDURA<sup>®</sup> brand), Naughty Bits, NC Beautiful, O2 Fitness, Oliver Twist Restaurant, ReSound, THOR•LO, UltraPet, and Zilla. The agency's work has been honored by, the Telly Awards, the Addys, Graphis, The London International Advertising Awards, The Communicator Awards, Sir Walter Raleigh Awards, Hermes Creative Awards, The InSpire Awards and the North American Precis Syndicate. For more information, visit <http://www.merrellgroup.com>.

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