

HOWARD, MERRELL & PARTNERS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jim Cobb Reaches 30 Years at Howard, Merrell & Partners

RALEIGH, N.C., March 30, 2011 – President and CEO Jim Cobb recently celebrated his 30th anniversary with strategic branding and advertising agency Howard, Merrell & Partners.

A farm boy from Vance County, N.C., Cobb pursued a job at Howard, Merrell & Partners because he could relate to agricultural clients like W. R. Grace and Company. Cobb got his start at Howard, Merrell & Partners in 1979 as an intern and joined the agency full-time in 1981. The agency's first employee with a Master of Business Administration, Cobb was hired as an account manager, with duties spanning everything from market research to account management. Cobb took the reins as president and CEO in 2004 after serving as an executive for more than 20 years.

“Howard, Merrell & Partners has always been a very close-knit group with aspirations of being successful,” said Cobb. “The culture itself hasn’t changed that much; it’s just grown. In 1981, people had the vision to make this a great agency, and to this day we work very hard to make the most out of every opportunity. But we also have fun and clients enjoy coming here, and that’s something we’ve hung onto.”

Under Cobb’s leadership, Howard, Merrell & Partners has continued to expand its expertise and client offerings, adding public relations, social media, and interactive departments as well as individuals skilled in digital analytics and Hispanic marketing. The agency has almost tripled in size, growing to 65 employees in 2011. Today, Howard, Merrell & Partners is a thriving full-service agency that consistently brings home top honors from industry award competitions.

“Our legacy at Howard, Merrell & Partners is to do the right thing for the well-being of the human beings we work with, both clients and employees,” said Cobb.

To hear Cobb reflect on his 30 years with Howard, Merrell & Partners, watch a video on the agency’s blog at www.merrellgroup.com/blog/2011/03/07/jim-cobb-talks-about-his-30-years.

About Howard, Merrell & Partners

Founded 65 years ago in Raleigh, N.C., Howard, Merrell & Partners Inc. is a pioneer in understanding and applying the power of human emotion to develop engaging business and communications strategies. Agency services include branding, creative development and production, consumer insight research, event planning and management, interactive, Hispanic marketing, media asset management, public relations, and social media.

Recent clients include Bank Independent, BASF Plant Science, Butterball, Canvas on Demand, Central Aquatics, CHD Meridian Healthcare, Cisco, Colonial Bank, Component Hardware Group, Doctors Vision Center, El Pueblo Inc., Georgia-Pacific Professional (Dixie® and enMotion®), Hewlett-Packard, Interton, Invacare, INVISTA's CORDURA® brand, National Humanities Center, NC Beautiful, O2 Fitness, Oliver Twist Restaurant, ReSound, Safe Quality Food Institute, THOR•LO, UltraPet and Zilla.

Howard, Merrell & Partners has received 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. Visit us at www.merrellgroup.com.

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