



## **HIGHMARK COMPANIES 5<sup>TH</sup> IN RESEARCH TRIANGLE AND 48<sup>TH</sup> IN SOUTH IN BUSINESS LEADER MAGAZINE'S TOP 300 SMALL BUSINESSES OF THE SOUTH RANKING:**

**RALEIGH, N.C. (June 23, 2011)** – Highmark Companies, a leading Raleigh-based professional services firm, has been ranked one of the top 300 Southern small businesses, according to *Business Leader* magazine. Highmark ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the Research Triangle market and 48<sup>th</sup> across the South. *Business Leader's* Top 300 Small Businesses of the South is comprised of companies with 100 employees or less that are top performers in Business Leaders Southern markets of Atlanta, Charlotte, Jacksonville, Miami, Memphis, Nashville, Research Triangle (Raleigh/Durham), Tampa, and Triad (Greensboro/Winston-Salem). Rankings are based on one-year and five-year revenue growth, business achievements, and community involvement.

“We have moved up in the rankings from last year’s finish in the 2010 North Carolina Top 100. We are pleased at our ranking this year and that we now are measuring our success throughout the South. This is a testament to the continued growth of our company which is driven by the quality services our staff provides our clients,” said Highmark CEO Darrell Smith. “We are honored to be recognized as a leading small business in the South.”

Highmark provides professional services support in four core business areas: education, federal government, healthcare, and state and local government. Professional services include: project management, business process improvement, information technology, financial management and accounting, human resources, and systems integration.

Highmark has a formal corporate giving program where we contribute at least 1% of our annual profits. Last year we supported national charities, Operation Homefront and the UNICEF Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund. We also participated in Triangle-based charities, the Jimmy V Foundation and the General H. Hugh Shelton Leadership Institute at NC State University. Beyond the corporate donations, our employees will contribute their time and money to these charities. Our philosophy is that giving is part of being a good community partner and that it plays an important role in creating an esprit de corps within the Highmark team. We have found that the passion and creativity of our employees emerge when they know their efforts make a difference – and a large part of that comes through helping others.

Published monthly in various editions across the Southeast, *Business Leader* magazine provides market intelligence and features on the companies, leaders and business happenings in the area. Its annual rankings have become one of the South’s top honors for small businesses. Recognized companies were announced during nine Top 300 Small Business Awards Dinners held in June. The Triangle event was held on June 23, 2011.