



## Mary Birch Receives Edwin C. Eilert Award from Overland Park Convention and Visitors Bureau

May 21, 2010

The 2010 Overland Park Convention and Visitors Bureau honored Lathrop Gage's government relations coordinator Mary Birch with the prestigious Edwin C. Eilert - Converge Award yesterday during the organization's National Tourism Week Luncheon. This award is presented on rare occasions to recognize someone whose contributions significantly impact the coming together of people at a common place and makes a seismic impact on the community. Only two other individuals have ever received this award.

The bestowing of the Edwin C. Eilert - Converge Award comes at a time when Overland Park is celebrating its 50th anniversary as a city. Overland Park has planned an assortment of 50th anniversary celebratory events that will take place this year.

As the town celebrates the many landmark achievements that the business community and the city at large have made over the past few decades, the city has gone out of its way to recognize that Ms. Birch has served as an integral part of those achievements. From 1984 to 2002, she served as president of the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce, where she directed efforts to attract an unprecedented level of business to the city. During her tenure, 62,000 jobs and 4,000 new companies were created in Overland Park. In 2002, she was named "Johnson Countian of the Year" by Johnson County Community College. Major projects that were responsible for her being honored with the Converge Award include the Overland Park Convention Center, the Sprint Campus, and the Johnson County Education Triangle.

During her time with the Overland Park Chamber, Ms. Birch facilitated the government relations efforts for the organization and its members at the local, regional, state and federal level. She has established relationships with elected officials and staff at various levels and worked primarily in the area of strategic issue management.

As Lathrop Gage's government relations coordinator and chair of the firm's government relations practice area, Ms. Birch tracks issues and developments that may affect businesses on the local, state and national levels, and consults with clients as to how they may participate in the decision-making process. She also consults with clients who have obstacles in administrative and regulatory affairs. After her tenure at the Overland Park Chamber, and prior to joining Lathrop Gage, Ms. Birch served as an independent consultant to local and national chambers of commerce and other not-for-profit organizations.



**About Lathrop Gage:**

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