

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ADMINISTRATOR IS CERTIFIED TO  
INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES**

**TORONTO, January 18, 2012** – CEFEX, Centre for Fiduciary Excellence, LLC, has certified First Allied Retirement Services / Associates in Excellence of Walnut Creek, CA as adhering to the American Society of Pension Professionals & Actuaries (ASPPA) Standard of Practice for Retirement Plan Service Providers. First Allied Retirement Services/ Associates in Excellence (FARS) is among the first in the United States to successfully complete the independent certification process for retirement plan service providers.

The ASPPA Standard of Practice describes how a service provider of any size or type can help Plan Sponsors fulfill their fiduciary obligations. CEFEX uses 2 classifications: “recordkeeping services” defined as bookkeeping for retirement plans’ trading transactions and individuals’ accounts and “administration services” defined as administrative functions, including compliance testing required by relevant pension and tax laws and filing of government reports such as Form 5500. The Standard includes best practices for governance, organization, human resources, operations, planning, systems, and disclosure, as defined by a cross-industry task force established in 2007. The Standard is modeled after the “Prudent Practices for Investment Stewards” published by Fiduciary360 of Pittsburgh, PA.

FARS has been certified for its provision of Third Party Administration services. According to the General Manager of the Centre for Fiduciary Excellence, Carlos Panksep, “The CEFEX certification provides assurance to fiduciaries and their stakeholders that First Allied has demonstrated adherence to the best practices in the retirement industry. The successful completion of the independent assessment is an extraordinary indication of a firm’s accountability to its clients.”

The annual certification process involves a detailed assessment of operational data and procedures, followed by on-site interviews with key personnel. FARS is registered at <http://www.cefex.org/registeredCompanies.aspx> where its certificate can also be viewed. A summary of the Standard can be viewed by clicking on the certificate.

For information on the certification program and CEFEX please go to [www.cefex.org](http://www.cefex.org), where a full copy of the Standard of Practice is available.

For information about ASPPA, please go to [www.asppa.org](http://www.asppa.org)

For information on AIE please go to: [www.firstallied.com](http://www.firstallied.com)

*About CEFEX:*

*The Centre for Fiduciary Excellence, LLC. is an independent certification organization. CEFEX works closely with industry experts to provide comprehensive assessment programs to improve the fiduciary practices of investment stewards, advisors, recordkeepers, administrators and managers. CEFEX has offices in Toronto, Canada, and Pittsburgh, PA.*