![The SPARK Institute, Inc. logo]

News Release

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CONTACT: Tim Rouse, Executive Director
             860-658-5058

THE SPARK INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES THEIR 2015 SPARK AWARD RECIPIENTS

SIMSBURY, CT, November 9 – The SPARK Institute, a non-profit organization representing the retirement services industry, today announced the winners of their 2015 SPARK Awards. This is the first year for these awards and SPARK was delighted that more than 35 nominations were submitted for two awards; 1) Innovation in Plan Design & Administration and 2) Investment Innovation.

The award for Innovation in Plan Design & Administration went to Jim Hageney and Kevin Broderick from The Centurion Group, LLC. Mr. Hageney and Mr. Broderick are co-founders and co-managing partners of The Centurion Group. Centurion helps clients design and maintain retirement plans helping participants successfully save for retirement, while reducing fiduciary exposure and administrative burdens. Jim and Kevin have worked in the defined contribution retirement plan business since 1989 and have developed lasting relationships with corporate clientele, record keepers, actuaries, and attorneys. In addition to their work with 401(k), 403(b), 457 and non-qualified deferred compensation plans, Jim and Kevin are respected among his colleagues for their expertise in cutting edge plan design, fee benchmarking and investment analytics. In addition to this award Jim and Kevin were named Top 100 Plan Advisor of the Year in 2013 and made Forbes Magazine's "Top 50 Wealth Managers, Emerging RIAs in 2013". Jim, Kevin and several of their colleagues at Centurion Group are consistently listed as 401kwire's top 300 Most influential plan advisors. When asked why they were nominated for the Innovation & Plan Design Award, David Musto of Empower Retirement replied, "Centurion has developed a new patent-pending proprietary software tool to better educate plan sponsors about Fee Levelization. This led many plans to transition away from investment menus with disproportionate revenue sharing to a lower cost institutional share class model".

SPARKS second award for Investment Innovation was given to Bill Chetney, CEO of Global Retirement Partners. Global Retirement Partners is a leading retirement plan consulting firm offering a complete suite of services to both plan sponsors and investors. As head of this organization Bill has proven to be an innovative thinker in the retirement planning industry. Bill is probably best known for founding National Retirement Partners in 2006 and later selling it to LPL in 2010. In 2014 Bill founded Global Retirement Partners with approximately 400 advisors and joined LPL's hybrid RIA platform. Bill understands the power of an open-architecture and the value of a retirement planning advisor. He is dedicated and passionate about positioning Global Retirement Partners to become an innovator in participant advice. When asked what separated Bill from others in the market Bob Gain of Blackrock said, "Bill brings to his clients an institutional-quality investment review, with unbiased advice, along with a deep partnership with recordkeeper and DCIO providers". Bob went on to add, "No one has done more than Bill to make the advisor the critical part of the value chain for plans sponsors".

More information on these winners is available upon request by contacting SPARK at 860-658-5058 or by email at info@sparkinstitute.org.

About The SPARK Institute

The SPARK Institute represents the interests of a broad-based cross section of retirement plan service providers and investment managers, including members that are banks, mutual fund companies, insurance companies, third party administrators, trade clearing firms and benefits consultants. Through the combined expertise of its member companies, the Institute provides research, education, testimony and comments on pending legislative and regulatory issues to members of Congress and relevant Government agency officials. Collectively, its members serve approximately 80 million participants in 401(k) and other defined contribution plans.

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