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**August Turak Featured in Nationally Syndicated Column *WorkWise*
Executive Director of the SKSF Connects Business and Spirituality**

RALEIGH, NC (October 6, 1999) – Top Triangle CEO August "Augie" Turak has been featured in the Universal Press Syndicate's national column *WorkWise*, by Mildred Culp. Two articles, "Spirituality Brings Connectedness, Profit in the Workplace" and "Spirituality and the Bottom Line," draw upon Turak's extensive experience in business and spiritual endeavors. The column, begun in 1992, emphasizes job effectiveness and relationships at work, by focusing on the stories of business leaders.

In 1993, Turak began Raleigh Group International (www.ralgi.com), recently named the 49th fastest-growing independent software vendor out of 10,000 companies surveyed by Microsoft, and the 8th fastest-growing privately held business in the Research Triangle Park area of North Carolina by KPMG Peat Marwick and *The Triangle Business Journal*.

On the surface, Turak is a successful businessman who runs several Triangle software companies. But Turak's real passion throughout his life has been what he calls "spiritual seeking" – struggling to answer age-old questions about life and death. In his twenties Turak quit college and spent five years living and working with a Zen teacher in West Virginia. Later he was a protégé to Louis Mobley, the founder of the renowned IBM Executive School and a pioneer in developing experiential learning programs for managers. A powerful storyteller, Turak has lectured extensively about his experiences, encouraging people to pursue an introspective life. He is also Executive Director of The Self Knowledge Symposium Foundation, an educational nonprofit at the forefront of the national interest in spirituality.

"Augie is probably the most unique individual I've ever met... and I've had the opportunity to meet many of the rich, the famous and the renowned," says Steve Grubbs, Executive Vice President and Board of Directors member of BBD&O Advertising, New York. "New York is full of businessmen who know everything about money and nothing about life. But when I want advice about anything really important, I turn to Augie Turak."

It was this unusual combination of qualities that drew Culp to Turak. Editors and readers have described her *WorkWise* column as "engaging," "thoughtful" and "sensible." Culp has been featured in *Editor & Publisher*, The Associated Press, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. She was a longtime correspondent on The *WorkWise*® Report on KIRO AM, Seattle, and has been interviewed on The Wall Street Journal Radio Network, CNN Special Reports, and numerous radio and television stations. In addition, she is the author of *Be WorkWise: Retooling Your Work for the 21st Century*.

For her column, she asked Turak if he saw any conflicts between spirituality and making a profit. Absolutely not, replied Turak. "Because business gives the opportunity to be spiritual. And spirituality puts business in perspective so you end up treating other people better."

When asked how Americans in the workplace differentiate between spirituality and religion, Turak replied that spirituality is "...first an open-ended inquiry into matters of ultimate meaning. Spiritual people don't compartmentalize their lives, because spirituality permeates every aspect of their lives." Thus his personal behavior and his work behavior are consistent. "Because of spirituality, I'm radically less selfish than I would be otherwise," he explains, adding that he is not a majority stockholder in his company and pays himself less than his employees. He even uses the worst computer in the office. "Unselfishness leads to trust. With trust, I can tell people that when the product takes off, I'll not cut their commissions or salaries,

turn their accounts into house accounts or shrink their territories. These are things people spend a lot of useless energy worrying about. My identity isn't at stake in this business, because I'm in awe of the fact that there is something much larger and more meaningful for me than my work. I can't imagine why people jump out of windows because their businesses fail."

Other business and spiritual leaders agree Turak is an exceptional combination of savvy business leader and spiritual seeker. "For 20 years I have worked with people who have risen to the pinnacle of business and financial success. I have also been fortunate to meet men and women who operate from the highest level of spiritual understanding. Augie Turak is the only person I know who has achieved both," says John "Max" Maxwell, Senior Analyst, Commercial Electronics. Dr. William E. Willimon, the Dean of the Duke Chapel, best-selling author of *The Search for Meaning*, and ranked by *Newsweek* as one of the world's top ten English-speaking preachers, says, "Turak is a modern-day Socrates...and his revolution, the Self Knowledge Symposium, is the hottest thing happening in higher education today."

Turak has lectured extensively throughout the country in churches, universities, and business forums. His next appearance in the Triangle will be Thursday, November 4 at Duke University, where he will give his legendary "Five Years with a Zen Master" talk at 7:30 PM in the Bryan Center.

The Self Knowledge Symposium Foundation (SKSF) is an 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging people to consciously develop their own personal, moral and spiritual values and to live according to them. At the forefront of the national interest in spirituality, the SKSF creates experiential learning programs and social contexts within which people can explore the deeper questions in life, developing intellectual understanding and personal character in a quest for the life worth living. The Self Knowledge Symposium Foundation advises the SKS campus groups, sponsors a non-student discussion group, and co-sponsors meetings, lectures, retreats and *The Symposium* spiritual journal. For more information, visit www.selfknowledge.org.

August Turak enjoyed a highly successful career in the telecommunications industry before he became an entrepreneur. He has been an executive with MTV, The Arts and Entertainment Network, United Press International, and Adelpia Communications, among others. In 1993 he started his own software publishing company, Raleigh Group International, which was recently recognized by the accounting firm KPMG Peat Marwick as the eighth-fastest growing company in the Triangle area. He has been featured in national publications such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chicago Tribune*, Universal Press' syndicated column *WorkWise*, *VAR Business*, *Success*, *Selling*, as well as numerous local radio and newspaper interviews. Mr. Turak lives in Raleigh.

Raleigh Group International may be found at www.ralgi.com

WorkWise may be found at www.work-wise.com.