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Ms. Gerding holds the distinction of being the first woman from Minnesota to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy. Ms. Gerding's Navy career spanned nearly ten years at a time when being an Academy graduate, woman and a Naval officer challenged tradition. Her Navy career was highlighted by assignments unique for a woman, such as leading a Mobile Mine Assembly Group. In her last assignment, detailed in Washington, D.C., she fought against ignorance and prejudice as the officer responsible for administering the Navy and Marine Corps' HIV-AIDS personnel policy. In this challenging role, she found it gratifying to have a positive effect on the individual lives and families of thousands of sailors and marines infected with HIV.

After leaving the Navy, her leadership and organizational skills placed her in management positions of increasing responsibility with Washington-area IT firms contracting with the Federal Government, advancing from Project Manager in one firm to eventually the President of Operations and Corporate Officer for another. In 1999, seeking additional challenges and ready to expand her horizons, she formed HeiTech Services, Inc.

Starting from scratch, Heitech Services Inc. has prospered and grown expansively since 1999 because of Ms. Gerding's dedication and leadership. Employing a difficult and personally strenuous business model designed for rapid growth, Ms. Gerding marketed extensively to several targeted agencies during the first two years. By the end of 2001, HeiTech Services achieved the success measures of nearly 90% bid/win ratio and signed a multi-year, \$2.2 million contract with the U.S. Department of Education. In October of last year, HeiTech Services signed a multi-year contract valued at \$2.5 million with the Department of Commerce to provide NOAA with mailroom, printing, distribution and courier services.

Ms. Gerding's personal goal, to break the \$1,000,000 revenue milestone by the company's third anniversary on October 25, 2002, was exceeded by nearly \$300,000.

HeiTech Services, under Ms. Gerding's direction, applied for and was granted 8(a) certification by the Small Business Administration during the first year of operation. This 8(a) certification for HeiTech Services is significant because the Small Business Administration waved their normal requirement that the business be in operation for at least 2 years and unique in that Ms. Gerding, as the majority owner of HeiTech Services, was granted certification in the non-designated group category within 6 months of the initial application.

During her years directing projects, Ms. Gerding gained extensive experience in the application of a wide range of technologies, finding great satisfaction in matching a clients' needs to sensible technical solutions. During the course of her career, Ms.

Gerding developed and refined her own unique style and approach for satisfying her clients, learning first-hand what methods lead to successful projects and delighted customers.