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President of ALLETE Clean Energy named Business Person of the Year

Duluth, Minnesota—Eric Norberg, president of ALLETE Clean Energy, was honored today as Business Person of the Year by the University of Minnesota Duluth’s Labovitz School of Business and Economics.

The award was announced at the 24th annual Joel Labovitz Entrepreneurial Success Awards luncheon in Duluth. The prestigious award celebrates business leadership and success in the region and Norberg was chosen because of his innovation and creative entrepreneurship in the energy industry.

Norberg built upon his diverse experiences at Minnesota Power to become president of ALLETE Clean Energy when it was launched by ALLETE Inc. (NYSE: ALE) in 2011. ALLETE Clean Energy was formed to be a vehicle for growth in the expanding clean energy field and operates independently of ALLETE’s Duluth-based electric utility, Minnesota Power.

Under Norberg’s leadership, the company has grown in less than five years to be ALLETE’s second largest subsidiary, contributing \$30 million of net income in 2015, and increased the number of employees to 75 from four. ALLETE Clean Energy operates six wind projects in four states totaling 540 Megawatts. Last year, ALLETE Clean Energy developed, constructed and sold a \$200 million wind project in North Dakota.

“Eric’s impact on both Minnesota Power and ALLETE Clean Energy has been remarkable,” said ALLETE Chairman, President and CEO Al Hodnik. “He seized opportunities and met company challenges with his great vision, intellect and creativity. One of his great skills is to promote creativity in others, encouraging teams of employees to discuss and challenge ideas to achieve maximum results. This recognition of Eric is well deserved.”

Norberg began his career at ALLETE as an engineering intern with Minnesota Power in 1977. Over the next 38 years he would have a hand in many of the company’s most innovative projects and landmark deals. Norberg was instrumental in devising industry-leading fuel and rail contracts, developed Minnesota Power’s first wind project on the Iron Range, and launched a key account management program that transformed how the company met the needs of its large taconite and paper customers.

When carbon constraints began appearing on the nation’s radar, Norberg came up with the idea of an asset swap to acquire a transmission line from North Dakota while simultaneously phasing

out Minnesota Power's interest in a coal-fired power plant. This enabled Minnesota Power to build the largest wind farm in North Dakota and provide clean energy to customers for years to come. Norberg also negotiated a power purchase agreement with Manitoba Hydro that resulted in plans to build an international transmission line known as the Great Northern Transmission Line in the United States.

Norberg said he is honored to be named Business Person of the Year and is especially proud of the growth and success of ALLETE Clean Energy.

"We have an incredible team that has embraced the belief that there are many opportunities in a clean energy future, and we've been able to deliver results," Norberg said. "It's a great time to be in the energy business."

Norberg, the son of a miner and a schoolteacher, grew up in Tower, Minnesota. He is a registered Professional Engineer in Minnesota. Norberg serves on the Minnesota Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute Board and the Lake Superior Railroad Museum Board. He is past chair of the Marshall School Board of Trustees.

More information about ALLETE is available at www.allete.com.

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