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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southeastern Findings Sponsors Scholarships for JA Bench Jeweler Certification

Jewelry supplier donates \$7,500 to Jewelers of America's certification program

New York, NY – Jewelers of America (JA) has announced that wholesale supplier Southeastern Findings Inc., will sponsor ten JA Bench Jeweler Certification scholarships, totaling \$7,500, in 2008. The scholarships demonstrate Southeastern Findings' commitment to serving the manufacturing jeweler, by supporting a program that promotes the talent and career development of bench jewelers.

“Southeastern Findings is excited to be able to help bench jewelers achieve JA Bench Jeweler Certification, which is an instantly recognized description of value,” says Gene Callaway, Southeastern Findings president. “After 30 years of working closely with manufacturing jewelers, we realize it is important to distinguish the quality and talent of professional bench jewelers.”

The JA Bench Jeweler Certification program – open to all bench jewelers – sets industry-wide standards for evaluating a bench jeweler's talent, which has resulted in a system to clearly communicate skill level to an employer, colleague or customer. Certified bench jewelers are acknowledged as professional leaders in their field and can use their certified skills to differentiate their stores' services from competitors.

The ten scholarships will be available for three of the four levels of JA Bench Jeweler Certification: JA Certified Bench Jeweler (CBJ), JA Certified Senior Bench Jeweler (CSBJ) and JA Certified Master Bench Jeweler (CMBJ). Southeastern Findings, based in Atlanta, GA, will grant scholarships to an individual from each of the following eight Southern states: Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Virginia and Kentucky. Two additional scholarships will be granted “at-large” to individuals from two other states. All

scholarship applicants must meet current JA Bench Jeweler Certification guidelines. To apply for the scholarships, bench jewelers should visit the Jewelers of America website, www.jewelers.org, on April 20th to download the Southeastern Findings scholarship application.

A Commitment To Bench Jewelers

The Southeastern Findings scholarships come at a time when Jewelers of America is reinvigorating its commitment the JA Bench Jeweler Certification program, more than ten years after it was first developed. The association, along with the American Gem Society, convened a Bench Jeweler Education Resource Forum last year, to address a number of issues affecting bench jeweler certification, education and marketing.

“Jewelers of America has long recognized the importance of expert bench jewelers to the future health of the industry. We are grateful to Southeastern Findings for supporting the JA Bench Jeweler Certification program and sharing in a commitment to these skilled craftspeople,” says Matthew A. Runci, president and CEO of Jewelers of America.

The Southeastern Findings JA Bench Jeweler Certification Scholarships complement Jewelers of America’s existing scholarship program for employees of JA-member stores, which are applicable toward many industry educational courses. For more information, visit www.jewelers.org/profdevelopment/seminars.html.

To inquire about partnering with JA in sponsorship opportunities, or to learn more about the JA Bench Jeweler Certification program, email Director of Education David Peters at davidpeters@jewelers.org or call 310-287-1161.

Southeastern Findings, Inc. has been a leader in the wholesale jewelry business for more than 30 years. It specializes in findings, mountings, tools and wedding bands. For more information, visit www.sefindings.com.

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