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Willdan Honored in Brill Awards for IT Efficiency Program

ANAHEIM, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Willdan Group, Inc. (NASDAQ:WLDN) today announced that its wholly owned subsidiary Willdan Energy Solutions (Willdan)—a leading national provider of specialized energy, water and resource management services—in partnership with AEP Ohio, and Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS), a division of the American Chemical Society and world's authority for chemical information, were honored by the Uptime Institute with its coveted Brill Awards for Efficient IT for the development and deployment of a new high-density, high-performance compute cluster for CAS.

The CAS/AEP Ohio/Willdan team's entry was evaluated by more than 90 industry professionals and, according to the Uptime Institute, was recognized as the best submission received from North America in the IT Systems Efficiency category.

"This award recognizes a great project that comprised industry-leading technology, strong project planning, and cost effective implementation," explained Willdan Energy Solutions vice president Josh Milberg. "It also shows the tangible customer benefits that can be derived from working through the AEP Ohio Data Center Energy Efficiency program."

"What made this project particularly exciting was CAS's decision to pursue the latest technologies and IT strategies in planning for the growth of the new compute cluster," added AEP Ohio's Program Manager Michelle Cross. "Through smart planning, they were able to significantly reduce the space, power, and cooling requirements of the cluster, while maintaining the required performance and reliability."

The project reduced the data center's physical footprint considerably, avoided 130 tons of load on the mechanical systems and reserved system capacity for future growth, without sacrificing performance. In addition, AEP Ohio provided incentives through its program. The project features a payback period of 5.1 years with a savings of 2,742,936 kilowatt hours in energy consumption per year.

"Consistent with CAS's philosophy for ongoing reinvestment in our infrastructure, this valuable partnership with AEP and Willdan ensures CAS continues to efficiently process rapidly growing publicly disclosed chemistry from around the world and supports market expansion in emerging regions, such as Asia," said Scott Painter, CAS Director, Facilities Operations.

"Through AEP Ohio's energy efficiency program," said Milberg, "we were able to work closely with CAS to fully evaluate and verify the project's energy savings. This project serves as an example of what can be accomplished in a data center, and will serve as a fantastic launching pad for CAS to continue its energy efficiency program far into the future."

In a statement released by the Uptime Institute, Brill Awards Program Director Kevin Heslin credited Brill winners with their significant achievement. "The Brill Awards attracted more than 100 entries from 19 countries. Honoring the best of these projects will provide incentive and examples for other companies to continue improving IT efficiency."

About Willdan Energy Solutions

Willdan Energy Solutions is a leading national provider of specialized energy, water, and resource management services to a growing list of clients that includes utilities, local and federal governments, hospitals, schools and private enterprises. Our integrated portfolio of services comprises marketing and engineering, program management and implementation of energy efficiency and water conservation programs and development and implementation of information systems for the energy industry. Additional areas of expertise include hardware retrofits, commissioning and retro-commissioning, demonstrations of new technologies, energy efficiency education/outreach, sustainability strategy, and local government partnerships.

About Willdan Group, Inc.

Celebrating its 50th year of business, Willdan provides outsourced professional technical and consulting services to public agencies, public and private utilities, and commercial and industrial firms throughout the United States. Willdan benefits from well-established relationships, industry-leading expertise and a solid reputation for delivering projects on time and on budget. The company's service offerings span a broad set of complementary disciplines that include engineering and planning, energy efficiency and sustainability, financial and economic consulting, and national preparedness. Willdan has crafted this set of integrated services so that, in the face of an evolving environment—whether economic, natural, or built—Willdan can continue to extend the reach and resources of its clients. For additional information, visit Willdan's website at www.willdan.com.

About AEP Ohio

AEP Ohio provides electricity to nearly 1.5 million customers of major AEP subsidiaries Ohio Power Company in Ohio. AEP Ohio is based in Gahanna, Ohio, and is a unit of American Electric Power. News and information about AEP Ohio can be found at www.AEPOhio.com.

American Electric Power is one of the largest electric utilities in the United States, delivering electricity to more than five million customers in 11 states. AEP ranks among the nation's largest generators of electricity, owning nearly 38,000 megawatts of generating capacity in the U.S. AEP also owns the nation's largest electricity transmission system, a 40,000-mile network that includes more 765-kilovolt extra-high voltage transmission lines than all other U.S. transmission systems combined. AEP's transmission system directly or indirectly serves about 10 percent of the electricity demand in the Eastern Interconnection, the interconnected transmission system that covers 38 eastern and central U.S. states and eastern Canada, and approximately 11 percent of the electricity demand in ERCOT, the transmission system that covers much of Texas. AEP's utility units operate as AEP Ohio, AEP Texas, Appalachian Power (in Virginia and West Virginia), AEP Appalachian Power (in Tennessee), Indiana Michigan Power, Kentucky Power, Public Service Company of Oklahoma, and Southwestern Electric Power Company (in Arkansas, Louisiana and east and north Texas). AEP's headquarters are in Columbus, Ohio. News releases and other information about AEP can be found at www.AEP.com.

About CAS

Chemical Abstracts Service (www.cas.org), a division of the American Chemical Society, is the world's authority for chemical information. CAS is the only organization in the world whose objective is to find, collect and organize all publicly disclosed chemical substance information. A team of scientists worldwide curates and controls the quality of the databases, which are recognized as the most comprehensive and authoritative by organizations around the world. By combining these databases with advanced search and analysis technologies (SciFinder[®] and STN[®]), CAS delivers the most current, complete, secure and interlinked digital information environment for scientific discovery.

About Uptime Institute

Uptime Institute, a division of The 451 Group, provides independent thought leadership, certification, education and professional services for the global data center industry. Uptime Institute is best known for its creation and global administration of the Tier Standard for Data Center Design, Construction and Operational Sustainability. Uptime Institute has office locations in the U.S., Costa Rica, Brazil, United Kingdom, Spain, Dubai, Russia, Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia.

The Brill Awards continue the legacy of Uptime Institute's founder, the late Kenneth Brill, and promote his vision of sharing best practices and new ideas to improve IT efficiency. The Brill Awards replace the GEIT Awards, an Uptime Institute program that recognized accomplishment in data center efficiency from 2008-2013.

Forward-Looking Statements.

Statements in this press release that are not purely historical, including statements regarding Willdan's intentions, hopes, beliefs, expectations, representations, projections, estimates, plans or predictions of the future are forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. The forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties including, but not limited to, the risk that Willdan will not be able to improve its profitability in 2014. It is important to note that Willdan's actual results could differ materially from those in any such forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially include, but are not limited to, a slowdown in the local and regional economies of the states where Willdan conducts business and the loss of or inability to hire additional qualified professionals. Willdan's business could be affected by a number of other factors, including the risk factors listed from time to time in Willdan's SEC reports including, but not limited to, the Annual Report on Form 10-K filed for the year ended December 27, 2013. Willdan cautions investors not to place undue reliance on the forward-looking statements contained in this press release. Willdan disclaims any obligation to, and does not undertake to, update or revise any forward-looking statements in this press release.

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