

PUGET SOUND BUSINESS JOURNAL PRESS RELEASE

DEFRANCO – MERRILL INSURANCE JOINS THE ADVANTAGE GROUP LLC

Effective September 29th, 2005 John DeFranco and Dave Merrill, owners of DeFranco – Merrill Insurance, Inc, 5215 Wilson Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118 joined THE ADVANTAGE GROUP LLC as partners.

DeFranco – Merrill Insurance is a multi-generation independent insurance agency located in the Lakewood Seward Park area in South Seattle near the end of Lake Washington. The agency has been in business since 1945 and at the same location since 1981. The agency is a specialist in property, casualty, life insurance and employee benefits. Both John and Dave are well known and long time members of their community.

THE ADVANTAGE GROUP LLC consists of 13 autonomous independent agency partners with 16 office locations ranging from Blaine on the Canadian border to Ocean Shores. The group of aggregators, one of the largest agencies in Western Washington, manages over \$68,000,000 in premium volume and represents 25 insurance carriers.

John Carmody, Executive Director, said “TAG is extremely pleased to have a high quality and very experienced insurance agencies like DeFranco – Merrill join the group. The Advantage Group is not a typical insurance agency organization. We combine the sophisticated capability of a large agency with the personal attention of a community based agency. DeFranco – Merrill, with their great reputation and large customer base, will help us expand our presence in the Seattle metro area and assist TAG in becoming a more dynamic competitor in the local marketplace.”