



For Immediate Release

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Alliance for Community Trees Announces \$100,000 National Grant Program Recipients

College Park, Md. (March 1, 2010) – The Alliance for Community Trees, in partnership with The Home Depot® Foundation, is pleased to announce the recipients of over \$100,000 in grants awarded by the National NeighborWoods Program™. NeighborWoods is a nationwide initiative that engages the public in hands-on action to produce tangible improvements to community health through tree planting and stewardship. Eleven organizations were honored in the national competition, which promotes strategic partnerships between greening organizations and affordable housing providers. Grant funds will support tree planting to enhance the health and livability of affordable homes.

“The Home Depot Foundation believes that trees are an integral part of a sustainable community’s infrastructure, and we are proud of our partnership with Alliance for Community Trees to plant and preserve a remarkable number of trees in urban areas,” said Kelly Caffarelli, president of the The Home Depot Foundation. Since 2005, The Home Depot Foundation partnership with Alliance for Community Trees has invested more than \$2 million in grants, technical assistance, and training to promote urban forest restoration for healthy communities nationwide.

“Thanks to the leadership and financial support of The Home Depot Foundation, we’re making investments in neighborhoods where the benefits of trees are needed the most. Trees provide clean air, energy savings for homeowners, and healthier play spaces for kids,” said Alice Ewen, executive director for the Alliance for Community Trees. Through its nationwide membership, Alliance for Community Trees has planted 15 million trees with help from 10.7 million volunteer hours to improve cities and towns nationwide.

The NeighborWoods grants recognize local urban forestry and affordable housing partnerships that will result in tangible, strategic improvements in the health and livability of the home environment of low-income families. The grants will fund projects that demonstrate the connection among quality affordable housing, adequate green spaces and trees and the overall health and success of communities. Trees can be the catalyst for profound community change and are an essential component of creating a strong and healthy community. Studies show that:

- When planted to provide shade and windbreaks, as few as three trees can reduce residential utility costs by as much as 50%.
- Residential property values are 5-12% higher when landscaping includes trees.
- Children exhibit greater concentration and self-control, even displaying fewer symptoms of ADHD, when they are provided with daily access to green settings.
- Children who live on tree-lined streets have lower rates of asthma.
- Trees along roadways encourage slower and safer driving; tree-lined streets have fewer accidents.

Alliance for Community Trees is delighted to recognize the following communities and organizations that will receive 2010 NeighborWoods Grants with support from The Home Depot Foundation:

Albuquerque and Las Cruces, N.M.: \$10,000 – Tree New Mexico (TNM) works to ensure sustainable forests in urban and rural communities and natural areas through restoration, public education, and advocacy. Trees are rare on residential properties in Albuquerque’s low-income, at-risk neighborhoods, and also on the blighted streetscapes of many neighborhoods in Las Cruces, one of the fastest-growing areas in New Mexico. Focusing on underserved residents and homeowners, TNM will use this grant to partner with local affordable housing associations to plant 88 low-water-use,

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energy-saving, shade trees in low-income areas in Albuquerque and Las Cruces. In the spring, TNM will plant at new homeowner properties in Las Cruces through partnerships with Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity and Las Cruces Clean and Beautiful. In the fall, TNM will collaborate with the Sawmill Community Land Trust, the Greater Albuquerque Housing Partnership, and Albuquerque's City Forester to plant trees on more than 30 home sites throughout the city. Volunteers from the impacted neighborhoods, TNM, and the local Home Depot stores will help distribute trees to private homeowners and assist residents with the plantings. This project will support community revitalization not only by improving property values through beautification and reducing residents' energy costs, but also by encouraging volunteerism, bringing together neighbors, and creating a sense of pride and shared accomplishment in the impacted communities.

Asheville, N.C.: \$10,000 – Asheville GreenWorks will utilize this NeighborWoods Grant to engage Asheville youth and residents in creating a healthy urban forest in the city's public housing and underserved neighborhoods. The twin goals of the project are to increase the city's tree canopy while energizing and educating youth about the benefits of trees, community service, and the outdoors. This spring and fall, a diverse group of volunteers from The Home Depot, Asheville Breakfast Rotary Club, UNC Asheville, Asheville Housing Authority, and neighborhood residents will help plant 130 trees at the Hillcrest and Klondyke public housing complexes, which are home to over 420 children. In preparation for the plantings, Asheville GreenWorks will meet with children in public after-school programs and at the YWCA to provide fun educational lessons about trees and the benefits they bring to a community. Local youth will tour the Hillcrest and Klondyke neighborhoods with Asheville GreenWorks staff and make suggestions about where trees should be planted. Ultimately, the youth participants will adopt the tree closest to their residence or in a place of personal significance. This intense involvement in the planning, planting, and maintenance processes will encourage the children to feel a sense of ownership and impact on their community through this project.

Dallas, Texas: \$9,980 – Texas Trees Foundation will use this grant to create a "Clean Up, Plant Up" project in a low-income area of West Dallas within the Neighborhood Investment Program target area. The City of Dallas is currently implementing a new energy efficiency and weatherization initiative in the area, to which this program will contribute by focusing on the energy-saving benefits of trees. Texas Trees Foundation will work with the City of Dallas to expand the City's existing initiative by developing and implementing an energy efficiency tree planting program. Dallas Area Master Gardeners, Citizen Tree Care Advisors, and local Team Depot associates from The Home Depot will help plant 180 trees to shade walls and air conditioning units at over 100 home units. At the same time, by shading homes, sidewalks, streets, and parking areas, the trees will also help minimize the city's heat island effect, a phenomenon that can increase temperatures by as much as six degrees during the day. Designed to reduce energy consumption and expenses for hundreds of residents in the West Dallas target neighborhood, this project will serve as a model for energy-saving tree planting that can be replicated in communities throughout Dallas and other areas.

Denver, Colo.: \$10,000 – The Park People seeks to preserve, enhance, and advocate for Denver's parks, recreation resources, open space, and urban forest. To help further the city's urban forest, The Park People will use this NeighborWoods funding to support a large-scale tree planting project at Columbine Homes, an affordable housing site in the Valverde neighborhood of southwest Denver. Southwest Denver has the lowest canopy coverage in the entire city. In partnership with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, local stores of The Home Depot, and the Denver Housing Authority, The Park People will engage volunteers and residents in planting 175 trees in yards and common spaces at Columbine Homes this spring. A presentation before Columbine's Local Resident Council and other outreach will encourage residents to participate in the project and foster a sense of ownership and

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appreciation for the new trees, which in turn will support long-term stewardship to ensure that the trees continue to provide benefits to Columbine's 450 residents for years to come. The Park People will follow the Columbine Homes project later in the year with a variety of fall programming, including a large planting in collaboration with KaBOOM! at a new playground in the Whittier neighborhood.

Detroit, Mich.: \$10,000 – The Greening of Detroit guides and inspires the growth of a “greener” Detroit through planting and educational programs, environmental leadership, advocacy, and by building community capacity. With its NeighborWoods project, The Greening of Detroit will target one of the many Detroit neighborhoods devastated by foreclosure and its side effects. Detroit experienced over 60,000 foreclosures in the last three years, and over two-thirds of those properties now stand vacant, causing tremendous problems for every neighborhood in the city. Many vacant properties become blighted and lose their value, negatively impacting the property value of surrounding homes, decreasing neighborhood satisfaction, causing resident flight, and in some cases attracting criminal activity. To combat these effects in one eastside neighborhood, The Greening of Detroit will partner with Habitat for Humanity Detroit to provide 16 low-income homeowners on Maryland and Lakepoint Streets with resources and training to plan, install, and maintain beautiful home landscapes utilizing low-maintenance and native plant material. Working with homeowners, community volunteers, and associates from The Home Depot stores, The Greening of Detroit will also plant 30 street trees in the neighborhood to complement the new home landscapes. The combined impact of these efforts will have a stabilizing effect on a neighborhood that has been severely affected by the foreclosure crisis, and will help to restore both the confidence and the property values of the neighborhood's homeowners.

Eugene, Ore.: \$10,000 – The Eugene Tree Foundation will use its NeighborWoods funding to organize a number of revitalization efforts in the Trainsong Neighborhood, Eugene's poorest neighborhood. Trainsong is surrounded on all sides by major industry, roads, and rail yards and suffers from severe air and water contamination. To begin to combat these environmental and economic ills and to help unite the community, Eugene Tree Foundation will undertake a yearlong program of stewardship activities, tree walks, and educational trainings that will culminate in four tree plantings this fall. The plantings will install over 400 trees at parks, along streets, and in homeowners' yards throughout Trainsong, through collaborative plantings with residents and community groups. To build strong community relationships and encourage direct engagement in this neighborhood improvement project, Eugene Tree Foundation will go door-to-door to all 713 housing units in the neighborhood to talk about tree planting, stewardship, and educational opportunities. Resident participants will be joined by volunteers from The Home Depot, Eugene Tree Foundation, and the broader Eugene community to undertake plantings like one in October that will erect a visual and audio barrier of trees to insulate the neighborhood from noise and air pollution from the adjacent train yard. NeighborWoods projects like these will be the first steps in helping to repair and strengthen the Trainsong neighborhood.

Fort Wayne, Ind.: \$10,000 – Trees Indiana is planning a 2010 NeighborWoods project to enhance the renovation of Renaissance Pointe, a new front-porch community that is building a hopeful image for a Fort Wayne neighborhood that was devastated by a massive tire fire in 1997. In April and October, Trees Indiana will partner with the City of Fort Wayne Parks & Recreation Department and Housing & Neighborhood Services to plant a total of 90 new trees in Renaissance Pointe, located in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods. Homeowners in the development's 300 new homes and 75 rehabilitated houses will join local volunteers, Team Depot associates from The Home Depot, and dozens of youth TreeKeepers from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Fort Wayne in this urban revitalization project that will bring the energy-saving, air-cleaning, property value-enhancing benefits of trees to this community. Trees Indiana will also partner with Habitat for Humanity to engage 20 Habitat homeown-

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ers in Fort Wayne in landscape maintenance education and tree plantings on their properties from May through November.

Greenville, S.C.: \$8,300 - Trees Greenville plants, promotes, protects, and educates residents about the benefits of trees in Greenville County, SC. As part of its ongoing partnership with the Greenville County Redevelopment Authority (GCRA), Trees Greenville will utilize this grant to plant 80 shade and street trees in the Brutontown, Biblebrook, and Needmore Communities. These efforts will contribute to the continuing revitalization of these neighborhoods, and will engage homeowners in planting on their own properties. Trees Greenville will partner with GCRA, Neighborhood Housing Corporation, Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County, and the Needmore and Biblebrook Homeowners associations to plan the plantings and to provide homeowner education through maintenance workshops, pruning trainings, and other educational opportunities. Volunteers from the neighborhoods' community centers will join residents and community youth along with associates from The Home Depot, Master Gardeners, and local high school and college student groups to plant trees throughout the spring and fall. The revitalization project will come full circle for one Home Depot employee who is a Brutontown resident; by volunteering on this Trees Greenville project as she has in the past, she will be helping to beautify her community while also increasing her property value and decreasing her energy costs.

Indianapolis, Ind.: \$10,000 – Keep Indianapolis Beautiful works to unite people to build community and transform public spaces through aesthetic and environmental improvement. Keep Indianapolis Beautiful is involved in many of the components of a comprehensive plan to revitalize the Near Eastside of Indianapolis, known as the Quality of Life plan. Tree planting is integral to the Quality of Life plan's aim to creating a healthy, vibrant community in the Near Eastside, which for years has struggled with crime, low income, and transience. In partnership with The Bonner Center, Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership, LISC, Indy East Asset Development, and neighborhood leaders and businesses, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful will plant over 200 trees along streets and parks to improve the energy efficiency, sustainability, and affordability of Near Eastside homes. Engaging Near Eastside residents, neighborhood volunteers, and dozens of Team Depot associates from local The Home Depot stores, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful's tree planting project will contribute to the Quality of Life goals of enhancing greenspace and improving the health and sustainability of the home environment for the area's low-income residents.

Pittsburgh, Pa.: \$9,500 – Friends of the Pittsburgh Urban Forest (FPUF) aims to enhance its home city's vitality by restoring and protecting the urban forest through community tree maintenance, planting, education and advocacy. Pittsburgh has experienced a substantial drop in its number of trees in recent years: approximately 4 trees are lost to construction, pollution, disease, or neglect for every 1 tree planted. FPUF will help increase the city's tree canopy by planting 30 large trees at the new Oak Hill Phase II development. Built on grayfield land in the city's urban core on the site of a demolished public housing complex, Oak Hill Phase II is a mixed income residential project designed with a number of green credentials. A dense, walkable environment connected to open space and public transportation, the community will feature sustainable construction materials and energy-efficient systems for heating, plumbing, lighting, and more. This green vision was the accomplishment of the Oak Hill Residents Association, which worked closely with the housing developers to achieve their goals for a health community. The Oak Hill Residents Association will work with FPUF to fulfill the goal of adequate trees and green space in the development, and residents will partner with The Home Depot volunteers, students from adjacent universities, and city Tree Tenders for the tree plantings this fall. Training throughout the spring and summer will prepare some Oak Hill residents to graduate from the Tree Tender program, meaning the new trees will be maintained through sustained community engagement in years to come.

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Wilmington, Del.: \$8,960 - The Delaware Center for Horticulture (DCH) cultivates a greener community, inspiring appreciation and improvement of our environment through horticulture, education, and conservation. In partnership with the West End Neighborhood House and Cornerstone West, DCH will plant 38 trees on the property of new homeowners in the Little Italy neighborhood. DCH's efforts will help revitalize this densely-populated, diverse community in Wilmington's Hilltop neighborhood, where active civic groups and neighborhood organizations are working to confront challenges like crime and blighted and vacant housing. Homeowners at two housing projects, The Pavilion and Clayton Court, will join with DCH Tree Stewards, The Home Depot associates, students, neighborhood volunteers, and other area residents to plant new, neighborhood-beautifying trees in yards, streets, and common spaces. Pavilion and Clayton Court residents will benefit from the improved air and water quality, increased shade, lower summer temperatures, and lower energy costs that new trees will bring. DCH will educate residents about the value of trees in the urban environment and train them on proper tree maintenance so that their trees will survive as sustainable revitalizing tools in the Little Italy community.

About Alliance for Community Trees

Alliance for Community Trees (ACT) is dedicated to ensuring clean air, green streets, and healthy neighborhoods by planting and caring for trees. With 160 grassroots affiliates in 41 states and Canada, ACT engages volunteers to take action to improve the environment where 80% of people live – in urban areas. Together, ACT member organizations have planted and cared for 15 million trees in cities with help from 10.7 million volunteer hours. For more information, visit www.actrees.org.

About The Home Depot Foundation

The Home Depot Foundation was created in 2002 to further the community building goals of The Home Depot. The Home Depot Foundation is dedicated to building affordable homes for working families that are healthy to live in and affordable to own. To make homes healthy and affordable, the Foundation encourages developers to incorporate responsible design and use durable and quality materials to ensure that homes are more energy and water efficient, have good indoor air quality, and provide a safe and healthy space to live. Since its formation, The Home Depot Foundation has granted \$120 million to nonprofit organizations and supported the development of more than 65,000 affordable, healthy homes. For more information, visit www.homedepotfoundation.org.

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