



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sustainable Florida Best Practices Winners Show Innovation and Inventiveness are Good for the Environment and the Economy

Orlando, FL -- The Sustainable Florida - Collins Center recently held its 11th Annual Sustainable Florida Best Practice Awards ceremony to recognize award winners for a variety of sustainability practices including energy independence initiatives, revolutionary recycling programs, a waste-to-energy program, a neighborhood energy challenge and green building programs.

The Best Practice award ceremony was held at the Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando on June 9, 2009. Luncheon keynote speaker Cynthia Barnett from *Florida Trend Magazine* and author of *Mirage* presented the history of water in Florida and highlighted the crucial role water plays in our survivability.

The award winners represent the best in sustainability practices throughout the state of Florida. The 2009 Best Practice Award winners are:

Government Best Practice Award

City of St. Petersburg for the city's comprehensive Green City initiative.

Large Business Best Practice Award

Waste Management Inc. of Florida for their single stream recycling programs.

Sustainable Leadership Best Practice Award

Tie:

Mary Tappouni of Breaking Ground Contracting for her leadership in the construction industry, and;

Drew Smith with Two Trails, Inc. for his role in promoting green building.

Partnership Practice Award

Lee County/Covanta Energy Solid Waste Resource Recovery Facility that turns waste into clean, renewable electricity.

Non-Profit Best Practice Award

Council of Neighborhood Associations of Tallahassee/Leon County for a Neighborhood Energy Challenge to reduce green house gas emissions.

Small Business Best Practice Award

Biological Tree Services that promotes the use of natural biological products and environmentally responsible pest management practices

Green Building Best Practice Award

Hillsborough Community College South Shore Center for its South Shore Center receiving Gold certification from the USGBC – the first community college in Florida to achieve this certification for new campus construction.

A description of each award winner is shown below.

GOVERNMENT BEST PRACTICE AWARD

City of St. Petersburg: Last year an article in the St. Petersburg Times noted that Mayor Rick Baker had begun a quite yet ambitious campaign to make St. Petersburg Florida's greenest city. Through an executive order, the city's comprehensive Green City initiative complimented a citizen-based community planning effort that promotes innovation in land use planning, energy conservation and alternatives, parks planning and preservation, green building and water conservation. New construction meets LEED standards, city trails promote bicycle-friendly practices, and toilet replacement, rain sensor gauges and an extensive reclaimed water program that achieves zero discharges into adjacent waterways results in saving millions of gallons of water a day.

LARGE BUSINESS BEST PRACTICE AWARD

Waste Management Inc. of Florida is revolutionizing recycling in Florida by pioneering and expanding single stream recycling processing in Orange County and Pembroke Pines. In 2005, Waste Management Inc. of Florida engineered, constructed and christened the first SSR (Single Stream Recycling) system in Florida at the Recycle Materials Processing Facility in Orange County. Toward the end of 2007, Waste Management Florida completed a year's operation at its own facility in Pembroke Pines in South Florida. This process increases landfill diversion, promotes energy savings and conservation and increases the amount of valuable recyclables recovered – 17% increase in the amount recycled in Orange County, 34% in South Florida. All of this in a more efficient system to the home owner and businesses that want to recycle.

SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP BEST PRACTICE AWARD

In a tie, this award went to **Mary Tappouni** with Breaking Ground Contracting and **Drew Smith** with Two Trails.

Mary Tappouni is the President and founder of Breaking Ground Contracting in Jacksonville. Her vision and purpose for the organization has been to become a leader in environmental sustainability in the construction industry. A woman-owned business in a male oriented industry, Breaking Ground has become a model helping to build a path to promote green building through education, modeling, public relations and community service. Their office renovation embraces a goal of LEED Platinum. They will achieve, as an office, 80% reduction to landfill by 2010. Staff size has increased 200% since 2007 and Breaking Ground is ranked 9th in the region's list of Fastest Growing Companies. Ms. Tappouni was the recipient of the 2009 Florida State Small Business Person of the Year Award by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

As a principal of Two Trails, Inc., **Drew Smith** helped found the Florida Green Building Coalition and promote the concepts of green building. He was recently appointed by Governor Crist to the Florida Building Commission and serves as a National Director for the National Association of Homebuilders and a State Director of the Florida Home Builders. The Florida Green Building Coalition standard has become the preferred standard for the State of Florida.

PARTNERSHIP PRACTICE AWARD

Lee County/Covanta Energy Solid Waste Resource Recovery Facility: rather than bury their municipal solid waste in landfills, Lee and Hendry Counties use it

as a price-stable fuel to produce clean, renewable electricity. The emissions performance of the facility makes it some of the cleanest electricity in the power generation industry. With Covanta Energy, the Lee County Solid Waste Resource Recovery Facility conducted a \$120 million expansion to process 636 tons-per-day of municipal solid waste into 300 MW of clean renewable electricity for 640,000 residents. The Lee facility powers the neighboring recycling center and draws all of its 'process' water from a nearby waste water treatment plant. Additionally, the plant recovers more than 15,000 tons of iron-based metals annually which are processed into new products.

NON-PROFIT BEST PRACTICE AWARD

Council of Neighborhood Associations of Tallahassee/Leon County: the Tallahassee Neighborhood Energy Challenge was initiated and directed by the Council of Neighborhood Associations of Tallahassee/Leon County in partnership with a number of public and private partners. More than 1,000 neighbors in nearly 30 neighborhoods across the region registered to conserve energy and reduce green house gas emissions in a friendly competition. The Challenge combines web-based GIS mapping, sign-up, and "Ways to Save" education and tracking. The neighborhood with the largest reduction of electricity and associated carbon emissions over a six-month period will win prizes and awards.

SMALL BUSINESS BEST PRACTICE AWARD

Biological Tree Services - Tammy Kovar is a nationally recognized expert in developing biologically based approaches for plant and tree care. She enables homeowners, architects, governments and mega-mall developers to have vibrant landscapes while reducing life cycle costs and offering an environmental stewardship ethic. Biological Tree Services is a globally aware, leading specialty landscape maintenance service provider focused on using natural biological products and environmentally responsible integrated pest management practices.

GREEN BUILDING BEST PRACTICE AWARD

Hillsborough Community College South Shore Center, a public, comprehensive institution of higher education, empowers students to excel through its superior teaching and service in an innovative learning environment. HCC has four primary campus locations, with its South Shore Center receiving Gold certification from the USGBC – the first community college in Florida to achieve this certification for new campus construction. The building is a multi-purpose facility – one of six buildings

planned for the 60-acre campus. Built on an agricultural site, water is retained on campus through the use of white permeable pavers in the parking lot. Runoff from the paved parking area goes into a bio filtration system – not the sewer. A reflecting pool is filled by runoff from the roofs, which provides the gray water used in toilets and irrigation. The building is designed promotes day lighting without the heat and features auto-dimmable lighting. Preferred parking is offered to alternative fuel vehicles. Overall, the building enjoys a 25% reduction in normal energy costs compared to a regular building. Building a green campus provides the community with a valuable learning resource.

Sustainable Florida added a new award to this year's ceremony: Sustainable Innovation Award. This is a one time award created for outstanding innovation and given to the City of North Miami.

SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION AWARD

City of North Miami – As part of its Green Initiatives program, the City of North Miami rewards its recycling customers through an innovative program developed in partnership with RecycleBank. Each homeowner registers their single-sort recycling cart – where paper, plastic, glass and metals can be tossed into one bin, no sorting necessary. When it is picked up a sensor on the cart logs the amount recycled. Points accumulate and can be redeemed for goods and services from major retailers. The program increased recycling rates – rising from an average of 20 tons per month to 128 in its first month of service. Additionally, this will save more than \$6,000 per month in disposal fees.

Sustainable Florida – Collins Center is an alliance of business, government and civic leaders and organizations committed to defining excellence for Florida's economic, environmental and social future. It is a program of the Collins Center for Public Policy independent, non-partisan, non-profit that finds smart solutions to challenges facing Florida.

A list of all award finalists and other program information is available at www.SustainableFlorida.org

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