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Dallas Arboretum Breaks Ground On The Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden

Dallas, TX - After ten years of planning, the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden, 8525 Garland Road, broke ground on March 21st on its \$50 million, 7-acre children's science and adventure garden. 'Named for civic leader Rory Meyers, The Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden, an outdoor laboratory with its 150 interactive exhibits will be able to teach about nature in nature', stated Steve Coke, Chairman of the Dallas Arboretum Board of Directors.

Created by Van Sickle and Roller, Dattner Architects and MKW Landscape Architects, the team who developed the Everett Children's Garden for New York Botanic Garden, this project is in their terms, 'their most creative and appealing'. It consists of 16 indoor and outdoor classrooms that include: Pure Energy, First Adventure, The Incredible Edible Garden, Texas Skywalk and Habitats, Plants are Alive, The Wild Wetland Walk and a 9,100 sq. foot Discovery Center. The design team has also recently added a beautiful Orchard and Vineyard Walk to the edible vegetable garden with staggered bloom times that showcase the 31 best fruit-bearing trees for North Texas as well as grape and kiwi vines.

Maria Conroy, the garden's Vice President of Education stated that, "The Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden will reinforce and enrich national and state science education standards in a manner not possible in the classroom and will provide focused science support to under served children in Dallas ISD's lowest-performing schools. Substantial support will also be offered to teachers of science, particularly elementary school teachers. This garden will also provide an enjoyable and rewarding experience for families in a fun and beautiful environment."

'This Children's Adventure Garden will make a profound difference in the science education of local school children and give the City of Dallas the most outstanding children's garden in the nation', said Cecile Bonte, the Capital Campaign Chairman.

Widespread support for this project has come from many different areas in the community. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison is the Honorary Chairman and joining her in support are Michael Hinajosa of DISD, Former Mayor Tom Leppert, Dr. Johann Deisenhofer, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry for his work in photosynthesis and Chair of the Arboretum's Scientific Advisory Committee, Dr. Linus Wright, former Superintendent of the Dallas ISD, Dr. Ronald W. Estabrook, PhD., DSC., Biochemistry, U.T. Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Dr. Gerald Turner, President of Southern Methodist University, Lee Jackson, Chancellor of University of North Texas, representatives from the City of Dallas Park Board, City Council and the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Major donors include Howard Meyers and his sons Craig and Kevin who gave the lead gift in the name of their wife and mother Rory Meyers, the T. Boone Pickens Foundation, the Harold Simmons Foundation, the Rees-Jones Foundation, the Theodore and Beulah Beasley Foundation, the Constantin Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Leo F. Corrigan, Crystelle Waggoner Trust, Mr. John "Pete" Dewey, Mr. and Mrs. Robert England, Mr. and Mrs. Barry Epstein, the Estate of William Moore Beecherl, the Estate of Ruth Mildred Roy, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Fullinwider, Mr. and Mrs. Michael L. George, Hawn Foundation, Hillcrest Foundation, Hoblitzelle Foundation, Jerry R. Junkins Family Foundation, Mrs. A.D. Martin, Dr. and Mrs. Tom Mayer, Mr. and Mrs. William S. McIntyre, IV, the Ralph B. Rogers Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne R. Sanders, Mr. and Mrs. Brian Shivers, Mr. and Mrs. Darwin O. Smith, the T.C. Lupton, Jr. Family Foundation, Texas Instruments Foundation, The M.R. & Evelyn Hudson Foundation, The Meadows Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Alan Walne and the City of Dallas Bond Program 2006.

"The completion of this Children's Adventure Garden is a natural outgrowth of the Arboretum's mission and nationally recognized science education programs. In 2010 our degreed staff educators taught over 93,000 school children from the North Texas region," stated Mary Brinegar, the Arboretum's President.

The project is estimated to be completed in 2013. To participate in the final stages of fundraising for this garden, please contact Ms. Brinegar at 214-515-6606.

The Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden is located on the southeastern shore of White Rock Lake at 8525 Garland Road, Dallas, TX, 75218. The Arboretum is open daily from 9am until 5pm. General admission is \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors 65 and older, \$8 for children 3-12, and free for Arboretum members and children two and under. On-site parking is \$7. The Arboretum is wheelchair accessible and tram service is available for the mobility impaired. For more information and other events, call (214) 515-6500 or visit the Arboretum's website at www.dallasarboretum.org.

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