



April 14, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Columbus Poised to Host Largest Earth Day Volunteer Effort**

Columbus, Ohio – April 14, 2009 – The citywide Earth Day event in Columbus, Ohio is set to be the largest coordinated volunteer effort for Earth Day anywhere in the U.S. This year's event, named *Earth Day 2009: Picture This*, spans two days with Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> for volunteer worksites across central Ohio, and Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> for a celebration in Goodale Park, in the Short North area near downtown Columbus. In total, nearly 70 area worksites will host over 3,000 volunteers, planting trees, picking up trash, planting gardens, and otherwise beautifying natural areas and communities throughout central Ohio.


The idea of combining a large-scale volunteer initiative and a celebration into a single integrated Earth Day event originated in 2007 in Columbus with 'A Year in a Day'. The concept was to gather as many people together as possible to accomplish a year's worth of environmental volunteerism in one day. This model has since been copied, most notably by Green Apple Festival, a multi-city Earth Day celebration. Green Apple will be in 10 cities in 2009, and will for the first time include volunteer opportunities open to the public. In the past, these have been limited to employees of sponsoring companies. Despite the size of the markets Green Apple is active in, including New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, Columbus is poised to organize the largest volunteer effort in a single city with *Earth Day 2009: Picture This*.

The significance of Earth Day in Columbus has been recognized by Earth Day Network, which selected 'Picture This' as a featured event for 2009. Annually, Earth Day Network selects established, outstanding Earth Day events to support with targeted communications and other resources. Columbus is among an elite group of cities worldwide selected for this honor. Others include Tokyo and Buenos Aires.

Working with an extensive list of non-profit and community partners, Green Columbus, the non-profit organization behind Earth Day in central Ohio, has set-up 69 volunteer worksites across the Columbus metropolitan area for this coming Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. Activities range from planting trees to picking up trash to removing non-native species to planting community gardens.

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Promoting sustainable living by: 1) providing forums, 2) raising awareness, and 3) encouraging participation 

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Through [www.PictureThis09.org](http://www.PictureThis09.org), the website for the Earth Day event, Green Columbus centrally recruits volunteers, who can select from a list of opportunities at April 18<sup>th</sup> worksites and at the celebration on April 19<sup>th</sup>. When volunteers register, they are asked to list their school, non-profit, and company affiliations. These affiliations will be totaled to determine the winners of the Earth Day Challenge Cup awards. The Challenge Cup trophy, made completely of recycled glass bottles, sits on a base of reclaimed wood. The names of the company, school and non-profit organization that send out the most volunteers to *Picture This* will be recorded on the base. The winners will also receive a recycled glass plaque commemorating their accomplishment. NetJets is sponsoring the Earth Day Challenge Cup.

On Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> the celebration component of *Picture This* will take place in Goodale Park. The celebration has attractions for all ages including a great lineup of local bands, with Two Cow Garage as the headliner. The shelter house at Goodale will host green living workshops and a town hall style meeting with elected politicians, including Congresswoman Mary Jo Kilroy. Mayor Michael B. Coleman will also be delivering his annual Earth Day address. Other attractions at the park are a pedal powered photo pavilion, kids' tent, booths for environmental organizations and green businesses, Columbus Zoo animal shows and much more. The entire event at Goodale aims to send zero waste to the landfill by composting and recycling all waste generated.

The sponsoring organizations for Earth Day 2009: Picture This are: The CW of WHO-TV, CD101, Great Lakes Brewing, Earth Share of Ohio, Columbus Alive, COTA, Miriam Chon Designs, Fiji Water, Earth Day Network, Genuine Creative, Grip Technology, Jeni's Ice Cream, Limit Brands Foundation, OSU Office of Energy Services and Sustainability, and Weisenbach Recycled Products.

### About Green Columbus

Green Columbus exists to promote sustainable living in Central Ohio and globally by 1) providing forums for environmental groups, citizens and others to interact. 2) raising awareness about environmental issues and what can be done to address them, and 3) encouraging participation in action oriented green events. More information is available at [www.greenbus.org](http://www.greenbus.org)

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