

For Immediate Release

ISA Joins SITES Pilot Program

CHAMPAIGN, IL (May 25, 2010)-The Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™) announced the selection of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) as one of the landscapes to participate in a new program testing the nation's first rating system for green landscape design, construction and maintenance.

ISA, headquartered in Champaign, IL, will join more than 150 other projects from 34 states as well as from Canada, Iceland and Spain as part of an international pilot project program to evaluate the new SITES rating system for sustainable landscapes, with and without buildings. Sustainable landscapes can clean water, reduce pollution and restore habitats, while providing significant economic and social benefits to land owners and municipalities.

SITES, a partnership of the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin and the United States Botanic Garden, selected ISA based on its plans to incorporate extensive environmentally-friendly elements into the outdoor spaces of their corporate headquarters. These sustainable practices will include managing and collecting rainwater for landscape irrigation purposes, replacement of diseased trees, and the expansion and maintenance of an adjoining native prairie planting.

ISA joins an elite list of other pilot projects that include academic and corporate campuses, public parks with hundreds of acres, transportation corridors and private residences of less than one acre. Examples of other pilot projects are the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, and a New Orleans-based project intended to absorb storm water on the streets of the Lower Ninth Ward that were flooded during Hurricane Katrina.

The design and site development of ISA's landscape restoration and revitalization of their 2.2 acre site will be led by Kaizad Irani, program director and professor of landscape design and horticulture at Parkland College. Implementation will be a collaborative effort by Irani, Parkland students, ISA members and employees, and University of Illinois Extension East Central Illinois Master Naturalists. The group will determine the best amenities to include such as picnic tables, quiet places for reflection and mental restoration, exercise stations, and a quarter mile tree and garden walking path. "Our goal is to become an international model of sustainable design that demonstrates how a properly designed and maintained landscape enhances the neighborhood, and improves the environment as well as the physical and mental health of our employees, neighbors, and visitors," says Jim Skiera, ISA Executive Director.

Like the other pilot projects, the site will test the point system for achieving different levels of site sustainability on a 250-point scale, and the performance benchmarks associated with specific credits within the Guidelines and Performance Benchmarks 2009. Other planned sustainability features of the site include solutions for noise reduction from the I-72 off ramp, renewable power sources, and reducing heat island effect of the parking lot.

SITES will use feedback from this and the other selected projects during the pilot phase, which runs through June 2012, to revise the final rating system and reference guide by early 2013. The U.S. Green Building Council, a stakeholder in the Sustainable Sites Initiative, anticipates incorporating the guidelines and performance benchmarks into future iterations of its LEED® Green Building Rating System™. More information is available at: www.sitesinitiative.org



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sustainable-sites.org. For general media queries about SITES, go to: www.sustainable-sites.org/news/.

About the Sustainable Sites Initiative

The Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) is an interdisciplinary partnership led by the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at The University of Texas at Austin and the United States Botanic Garden to transform land development and management practices with the nation's first voluntary rating system for sustainable landscapes, with or without buildings. As these guidelines become the accepted practices by professionals and nonprofessionals alike, they will transform the ways we design and build on the land, creating landscapes that nourish life for generations to come. For more information, visit www.sustainable-sites.org

About the International Society of Arboriculture

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), headquartered in Champaign, IL, is a nonprofit organization supporting tree care research and education. By fostering a greater public awareness for the benefits of trees, we promote healthier trees and sustainable communities. As a part of ISA's dedication to the care and preservation of shade and ornamental trees, it offers the only internationally-recognized certification program in the industry and manages the consumer education web site, www.treesaregood.org. ISA represents more than 33,000 professional arborists around the world. For more information on ISA and Certified Arborists, visit www.isa-arbor.com.



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