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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Roar Media

Samantha Rego or Jeannie Salameh

samantha@roarmedia.com or jeannie@roarmedia.com

305.389.0940 or 727.644.5010

SOUTH FLORIDA'S FAIRCHILD CHALLENGE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM GOING GLOBAL

The Fairchild Challenge Provides a Jan. 27 – Jan. 30 Workshop to Help International Environmental Leaders Establish Youth-Oriented Programs Worldwide and a Jan. 30 Environmental, Political Debate for Local High School Students

CORAL GABLES, FL – Jan. 20, 2010 – Alexandra Forrester, manager of the Fairchild Challenge, a South Florida-based environmental outreach program founded at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, today announced an international roster of 10 environmental leaders who will participate in a unique training workshop to help instill environmental awareness, scholarship and stewardship among youths worldwide. It culminates Jan. 30 with more than 75 local high school students participating in debates about environmental and political topics. The four-day event takes place from **8:30 a.m. through 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27, through Saturday, Jan. 30, at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, Fla.**

Environmental educators and leaders from a nature institute in Vermont as well as from nature reserves and botanical gardens in Botswana, Barbados and Columbia, will participate in the week's events, which will include a "Satellite Partners Training Workshop" designed to help establish the Fairchild Challenge's successful youth-oriented programs across all points of the globe. Also scheduled is the 8th Annual Fairchild Challenge Student Congress Debates, where students from 15 South Florida high schools will debate critical environmental topics and weigh science against economic and political issues. A complete list of activities and debate topics is attached.

"The activities taking place during that four-day period are symbolic of the direction the Fairchild Challenge is heading as it continues to spread globally and light a fire in youths worldwide," said Carl Lewis, director of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. "Young people participating in the Fairchild Challenge acquire an appreciation for life and nature that takes deep root and helps each of them, and by extension their families and communities, to become lifelong stewards of our environment."

In its eighth year of programming, the Fairchild Challenge is quickly growing to become one of the world's most comprehensive and influential youth environmental education programs. The National Forum on Children and Nature, (NFCN), a high-profile campaign of the prestigious Conservation Fund, recognized it as a worldwide model for connecting young people with the environment in new and creative ways.

Designed by specialists at South Florida's world-renowned Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, the Fairchild Challenge comprises a series of individual projects, contests and performances in which students may choose to participate. These Challenge options include: writing opinion and research papers; performing songs and skits; creating gardens, artwork and newsletters; designing solar-powered devices; and formulating "green" cuisine menus. Participation is measured by a point system, with each school aiming to accrue enough points to receive the Fairchild Challenge Award at the annual ceremonies in May.

About the Fairchild Challenge

The Fairchild Challenge, established in 2002 by South Florida's 70-year-old Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, seeks to reconnect America's youths with nature and instill life-long environmental stewardship through an interdisciplinary program available free to middle and high schools. Designed to integrate with state curriculum standards, the Fairchild Challenge offers a series of individual projects and contests in which schools may earn points toward prizes awarded at an annual ceremony every May. Staff members at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, one of the world's premier conservation and education-oriented gardens, also train educators from public gardens, museums, zoos and other organizations to establish Fairchild Challenge programs throughout the U.S. and beyond. For more information, visit www.fairchildchallenge.org or call (305) 667-1651.

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The Fairchild Challenge
SATELLITE PARTNERS TRAINING WORKSHOP 2010 AGENDA
Wednesday, January 27 – Saturday, January 30

Wednesday, January 27

6 p.m. Wine, cheese and hors d'oeuvres welcome reception, followed by moonlight tour of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Thursday, January 28

8:30 a.m. – 9 a.m. Arrive at Fairchild (Corbin Bldg. Room A). Morning refreshments
9 a.m. – 10 a.m. The Fairchild Challenge: Introduction and overview
10 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. View videos and student entries
10:50 a.m. – 11 a.m. BREAK
11 a.m. – 12 p.m. Informal presentations by guest panelists
12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Lunch and informal discussion
1 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Training manual: Introduction and overview
1:45 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. The Fairchild Challenge online: Web site, Facebook, YouTube, Satellite Partners extranet
2:45 p.m. – 3:50 p.m. Questions and answers, general discussion
3:50 p.m. – 4 p.m. BREAK
4 p.m. – 5 p.m. Tram tour of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
{6 p.m. – 9 p.m.} *Optional: "Thursday Nights at Fairchild"*

Friday, January 29

8:30 a.m. – 9 a.m. Arrive at Fairchild (Corbin Bldg. Room A). Morning refreshments
9 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Year one: Preparing to launch the Fairchild Challenge
9:45 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. Identifying each site's local topics and potential partners and funders: Fund-raising and friend-raising strategies
10:50 a.m. – 11 a.m. BREAK
11 a.m. – 12 p.m. Activity: Developing Challenge options and the program
12 p.m. – 1 p.m. Lunch and explore the garden
1 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Questions and answers. General discussion
1:45 p.m. – 2:50 p.m. Site-specific team brainstorming session: The Fairchild Challenge at your site
2:50 p.m. – 3 p.m. BREAK
3 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Teams present their vision of the Fairchild Challenge at their site
3:30 p.m. – 4 p.m. Final wrap-up and feedback
4 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. Certificates and group photo

Saturday, January 30

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Eighth Annual Fairchild Challenge Environmental Debates. (Garden House Auditorium).
Morning refreshments and lunch

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