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For immediate release

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### **TREE Fund Makes a New Home Outside of Chicago**

Naperville, Illinois -- The Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund (TREE Fund) joined Naperville's growing not-for-profit business community in October with the opening of its new office space at 552 S. Washington St., Ste. 109, located in the Naper Office Plaza.

The TREE Fund is currently the leading non-governmental source of funding for research and education programs in the field of arboriculture (the science of cultivating and managing trees in a landscape). The foundation has distributed more than \$6 million to date in the form of scholarships and research grants to students and professionals in the industry. The TREE Fund was established in 2002 through a merger of the former Research Trust of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and the National Arborist Foundation of the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA). The TREE Fund's mission is to identify and fund projects and programs which advance knowledge in the field of arboriculture and urban forestry to benefit people, trees and the environment.

Currently, the majority of the TREE Fund's revenue is generated by its two signature events: the week-long Tour des Trees cycling tour and the Raise Your Hand for Research Gala Auction, both held annually in conjunction with the ISA's conference in July. The TREE Fund is also the beneficiary of several fundraising events coordinated during the year by the TCIA and other organizations in the tree care industry. Individual and corporate contributions are vital to the foundation as well.

The money raised has contributed to the development and dissemination of new knowledge about issues critical to the arboriculture profession. These include environmentally-sensitive vegetation management methods, worker and public safety concerns, biological engineering of superior tree varieties, and pest /disease management strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to name a few.

In 2007, the TREE Fund was able to fund just 25% of the applications it received from researchers, educators and students, and it's apparent that the need for funding is rapidly outstripping its availability from current sources. Therefore, in January 2008 the TREE Fund Endowment Campaign was launched with the ambitious goal of raising \$3 million by the end of 2010. Building the TREE Fund's endowment helps to assure the availability of funding for arboricultural research and education in perpetuity, thereby reducing dependence upon revenues from special events.

The endowment campaign got off to a strong start, with \$500,000 committed in its first year. Lead donors included the F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Co. of Stamford, CT; Tim and Donna Gamma of Gamma Shield Shade Tree, St. Louis, MO; Jim and Annie Barborinas

of Urban Forestry Service, Mt. Vernon, WA; Arizona Public Service, Arizona's largest utility company; and the not-for-profit Connecticut Tree Protective Association, whose membership includes tree care professionals dedicated to the care and protection of that state's urban and rural forests.

The TREE Fund's Board of Trustees and its Executive Director, M. Janet Bornancin, are actively seeking contributions to expand its current grant and scholarship funding capability, and to include new scholarship opportunities for masters-level arboriculture degree candidates. Current funding opportunities are restricted to undergraduates and Ph.D. candidates. The TREE Fund is also seeking to underwrite the development of educational programs for youngsters aged 5 to 18 to encourage proper tree care and cultivate an interest in career opportunities in the arboriculture industry.

Participation in the TREE Fund Endowment campaign is open to everyone who cares about trees and wants to endow the promise of healthy trees in our communities for future generations. For more information, visit [www.treefund.org](http://www.treefund.org) or contact Janet Bornancin at 630-369-8300.

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