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*Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum project is a showcase for state-of-the-art sustainability.*

Winchester, VA (March 22, 2007) – Early commitment to responsible environmental practices is paying off for the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum (SVDM). The ten year old museum began planning a new facility 3 years ago, aiming for the highest LEED certification. Now, as the project approaches ground breaking, that green commitment is finding resonance with an impressive list of corporations.

**A Convenient Project**

“The explosion of green consciousness is undeniable: hybrid cars, *An Inconvenient Truth*, bio-based fuels in the State of The Union address...there is definitely critical mass for sustainability, and we're seeing it clearly in corporate support for the Museum.” remarked Peggy McKee, the museum's executive director. “Leaders in environmentally responsible products and practices - from our architects to our HVAC supplier - want to see this project happen, are supporting it, and are using it to tell their story. We're calling it the *Convenient Truth* dynamic.”

**Global and Local**

Winchester, Virginia is home to a surprising number of corporate headquarters, among them are companies finding multiple motives for supporting the museum. National cabinet manufacturer American Woodmark, Howard Shockey & Sons, Inc, Reader and Swartz Architects and commercial cleaning and maintenance equipment leader Rubbermaid Commercial Products have all signed on to support the project, seeing an opportunity to enhance the quality of life for employees, as well as accelerating their sustainability presence. Beyond the Shenandoah Valley, Germany-based REHAU and BASF, Hydron Module, of Mitchell, South Dakota, Canada's Amvic, Insulspan, Carolina Stalite Company and International Supply Consortium found the SVDM to be an ideal demonstration project.

**Tests and Measures**

A recent successful negotiation between the SVDM and Virginia Tech's School of Architecture has resulted in a collaborative agreement that adds a unique dimension to the project: an “honest broker” responsible for quantifying the energy usage/savings of the sustainability systems, the effectiveness of the watershed management, and so forth. “With Virginia Tech's participation, the project's profile elevated several notches.” said McKee. “Our staff and our board began this journey with a commitment to do something for our community. We didn't fully anticipate the extent to which it has become a phenomenal magnet for drawing resources into our region.”

Construction on their new 27,000 square foot children's museum will begin in 2007. Founded in 1996 as a 501c3 organization, the Discovery Museum provides children and their families and caregivers interactive exhibits and programs that focus on science, math, cultures, and the arts.

Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies is one of the largest of its type in the nation. The college is composed of three schools and the department of art and art history, part of the multi-college School of the Arts. The School of Architecture + Design includes programs in architecture, industrial design, interior design, and landscape architecture. The School of Public and International Affairs includes programs in urban affairs and planning, public administration and policy, and government and international affairs. The Myers-Lawson School of Construction, a joint school of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies and the College of Engineering, includes programs in building construction and construction management. The college enrolls more than 2,000 students offering 25 degrees taught by 160 faculty members.