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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Commercial Development Greens Our City in More Ways Than One: Landscape Design Showcasing Ecological Site Features Wins Award

ST. LOUIS, MO – Sustainable building practices are gaining momentum in St. Louis. The William A. Kerr Foundation at 21 O’Fallon Street in St. Louis, Missouri, which recently attained a platinum (the highest level) LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, is now the beneficiary of an Award of Merit by the St. Louis Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. This award is given to projects that exhibit a “Superior Professional Accomplishment in the field of Landscape Architecture.”

The landscape architect, Mary Francois Deweese, (owner of Acorn Landscapes), designed the award-winning landscape. Deweese noted, “The demand for green site design has really skyrocketed in the last two years. In this case, it was a challenge to meet platinum level LEED criteria for all the site related aspects, including low impact storm-water management, in such a small space. The fact that the space feels good and functions well as an outdoor green space for people, and at the same time maintains strict adherence to environmentally sound building practices, is a good illustration that aesthetics, functionality and environmentally sensitive site planning don’t need to be mutually exclusive.”

Low-impact site features showcased by the building include permeable pavers, bioswale, a detention planter, and a rain garden which cleans the storm-water while reducing runoff. Also, a rain barrel collection system for irrigation eliminates the need for potable water use in the landscape. The plants are primarily native species or adapted to thrive without additional water outside of that collected in the rain barrels. Other site features include seating and parking, sculptural materials, a green roof, lighting and a 33’ tall renewable energy wind turbine.

Deweese expressed appreciation for the many others who were involved with this project stating, “It was a pleasure working on it (the project) with so many talented design team members and I am grateful for their generous support and assistance throughout the process.” She added “I want to specifically thank John Sweet Trustee for the William A. Kerr Foundation, for his outstanding dedication, vision and commitment to the project. He is a green building pioneer who truly cares.”

Tim Montgomery (TMA Architects), the building’s green architect had this to say about the importance of site planning as a integral part of green building, “True sustainable design for any building project includes building materials, methodologies, interior finishes, mechanical, electrical, plumbing systems, daylighting, rain water harvesting, solar and wind power--foremost in inception, is a sustainable low impact landscape design, for the areas surrounding any building.”

The award will be formally presented to Deweese at the upcoming ASLA Awards Banquet December 9th

Mary Francois Deweese is a registered landscape architect and has been the owner of Acorn Landscapes, a landscape architectural firm, since 2000. She specializes in low-impact site planning, while preserving a respect for traditional aesthetics in both commercial and residential applications.

If you would like more information or to request an interview with Mary Francois Deweese, please call (636) 394-0255 or email deweese@acornlandscapes.com