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MEDIA ADVISORY

CURRICULUM AND FACILITIES TO REFLECT "GREEN CONSCIOUSNESS" AT ITC



(top, l-r) Gerald Durley, Aalok Deshmukh, Diane Dillon-Ridgley, Jorge Vanegas

(Atlanta, GA, March 21, 2007) "In the beginning" the earth was lush and green...and it was good. The Interdenominational Theological Center's (ITC) aim is to get back to that "good" place, at least on the ITC campus, and recapture the "*green civilization*" that once existed, when humankind lived in harmony with nature. It is expressed as an institutional focus in the word "*TheoEcology*".

The process began on March 9-10, 2007 with a discussion among 17 individuals, including Dr. Bernard Lafayette, Dr. Joseph L. Roberts, National Wildlife Federation/Apollo Alliance President, Jerome Ringo, and other distinguished individuals from across the city, state and nation, plus Dr. Frederick Ferré in from Germany and Dr. Stuart Kauffman from Canada. Two days of intense exchange took place during the gathering at ITC's Costen Center. ITC Trustee Paula Gordon and Provost, Dr. Edward Wimberly led the discussions, which centered on two tough questions: "What is a 'New Eden'/'Green Civilization'?" and "How do we get there?"

The group provided both high level guidance and down-to-earth suggestions for enhancing and growing ITC's entire curriculum inside the institution and beyond with the outlines for emerging "*TheoEcology Principles*". Among the many ideas offered in assessing what would be accomplished, Dr. Frederick Ferré suggested, "our goal is an earth ethic that places us in relationship to one another that's not destructive." The Very Reverend Sam Candler said, "we look toward a 'City of Eden' rather than a garden."

Once finalized, the principles will guide the ITC as it embeds "*TheoEcology*" in every aspect of the institution. The overall vision: "A *Whole World ...Open to Possibility, Energized by Hope, Intent on Flourishing.*"



A second Charette, on March 30-31, 2007, will focus on maximizing the institution's physical possibilities. The campus -- adjacent to the MARTA stop that serves the World Congress Center, Georgia Aquarium, New World of Coke, CNN Center and Olympic Centennial Park in downtown Atlanta -- will one day be a "must-see" stop for the world's visitors intent on experiencing a living demonstration of a "New Eden/Green Civilization."

Among this group of experts are:

Mr. Dennis Creech, Founder and President of Southface; Dr. Aalok Deshmukh, Senior Consultant with the RMI/ENSAR Built Environment Team; Dr. Gerald Durley, Pastor of Providence Missionary Baptist Church; Dr. Jorge Vanegas, Director of the Center for Housing and Urban Development of the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University; and environmentalist and human rights activist Dianne Dillon-Ridgley, a noted international speaker on sustainability, corporate social responsibility, population, gender and justice issues, a director at Interface, Inc., and a director at Green Mountain Energy, a leading retailer of renewably produced electricity in the United States.

OTHERS include:

Dr. Robert Michael Franklin, Professor at Emory University's Candler School of Theology; Cindy Jackson, Program Manager of Office of Solid Waste Management & Recycling, Georgia Institute of Technology; Mr. Ed Arnold, Executive Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility; E. Milton Bevington, Founder of Servidyne; Mr. James Langford, Executive Director of the Georgia Trust for Public Land; Rev. Connie J. Jackson, Executive Director of the City of Hope- Ray of Hope Christian Ministries; The Honorable Stacey Abrams, and ITC's Director of Institutional Maintenance, Mr. Joe Cates.

The charette schedule includes a tour of the ITC campus and a reception, Friday evening, 5:30-7:00 p.m. in The Costen Center Atrium. It reception is open to the media and interested members of the larger public. The ITC is located in the heart of downtown Atlanta and is one of the five Historically Black Institutions in the Atlanta University Center. For additional information, call 404-527-7718 or 527-7761

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