PRESS RELEASE
LSU HILLTOP ARBORETUM PROJECT IS REGISTERED FOR LEED CERTIFICATION

July 8, 2008, Baton Rouge, LA  Friends of LSU Hilltop Arboretum has announced that its upcoming enclosed educational facility has been registered with the US Green Building Council to become a LEED Certified Project. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is the international benchmark for environmental building design, construction and operation.

Part of the Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture, this is the first structure at LSU to be registered, and one of the first in Baton Rouge. The facility represents the last part of the building plan begun in 1999 which resulted in the existing administrative building, library, and open air pavilion. The design for all structures is by award winning San Antonio architectural firm, Lake/Flato, known for environmentally sensitive projects. The LEED Certification process will be administered locally by Kirk Edwards, AIA, and Lynne Martin, who are LEED Accredited Professionals working with Holden Architects. Butch Noland and Sit Wong of Noland & Wong Architects will be conducting the Construction Administration for the project.

Sustainability is an important focus of the programs offered by the Friends organization. It was begun by founder Emory Smith’s desire to use native plants for their low water usage and weather tolerance. It is continued today in the many programs offered to students and the community at large which aim to share information about planting for a healthier future in our own back yards.

The commitment to sustainability is a whole living system approach. LEED incorporates five areas of development: site, water efficiency, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality. Achieving this rigorous and prestigious certification will allow the organization to provide an additional education tool and serve as an example to the community.

Lead gifts have been received for the project and a fundraising campaign is underway. The group hopes to break ground during 2009. The LSU Hilltop Arboretum is located at 11855 Highland Road. More information is available at www.lsu.edu/hilltop.